

LETTERS FROM FRANCE

TO A.

GENTLEMAN

IN THE

SOUTH OF IRELAND:

CONTAINING

VARIOUS SUBJECTS

INTERESTING TO BOTH NATIONS.

WRITTEN IN 1787.

By JAMES ST. JOHN, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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M,DCC,LXXXVIII.



TO HIS GRACE
Charles Archbishop of Cashel,

THIS BOOK,

WITH ALL IMAGINABLE VENERATION,

IS INSCRIBED BY

HIS GRACE'S

MOST HUMBLE,

MOST OBEDIENT,

AND DEVOTED SERVANT,

JAMES ST. JOHN.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM



Charles Darwin

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

WITH ALL THE INFORMATION CONTAINED

IN THE

THIS GRACE

NOT KNOWN

NOT KNOWN

AND NOTED CHURCH

JAMES ST. JOHN

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L E T .

L E T T E R S

FROM

F R A N C E.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Paris, July 15th, 1787.

AS I passed by the arsenal yesterday, I was pleased with a singular piece of architecture. The pediment of the entrance is supported, not by the fluted shafts of columns, but by four pillars in the form of large cannon. This piece of architecture is very apropos,

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and

and though executed in a poor stile, is not unworthy of notice. Over the gate is this very poetical inscription.

*Ætna hæc Henrico Vulcania tela ministrat,
Tela Giganteos débèllatura furores.*

This is attributed to Henry IV. but it was Henry II. who built the greater part of the arsenal; and if this inscription was intended for him, it must appear an empty piece of Gasconade, like many other inscriptions to the memory of the French kings.

In the Place-royale, near the Bastile at Paris, is an equestrian statue of Lewis XIII. There are inscriptions on the four sides of the pedestal, one of which I send you, as I transcribed it on the spot.



POUR

POUR LOUIS LE JUSTE

S O N N E T.

Que ne peut la vertu, que ne peut la courage ?
J'ay domté pour jamais l'Herefi en son fort :
Du Tage imperieux j'ay fait trembler le bord,
Et du Rhein jusqu' à l'Ebre accru mon heritage.

J'ay sauvé par mon bras l'Europe d'Esclavage,
Et si tant de travaux n'eussent hasté mon sort,
J'eusse attaqué l'Asie, & d'un pieux effort
J'eusse du saint tombeau vengé le long servage.

Armand, le grand Armand, l'ame de mes exploits,
Porta de toutes parts mes armes et mes lois,
Et donna tout l'Eclat aux Rayons de ma Gloire.

Enfin il m'eleva ce pompieux monument,
Ou pour rendre à son nom memoire pour memoire
Je vieux qu'avec le mien il vive incessamment.

" FOR LEWIS THE JUST

" S O N N E T.

" What cannot virtue, what cannot courage do ?

" I have conquered for ever Herefy in all her
" power :

" Of the imperial Tagus I have made tremble
" the bank

" And from the Rhine to the Hebrus extended
" my inheritance.

" I have saved with my arm Europe from
" slavery,

" And if so many labors had not hastened my
" fate,

" I would have attacked Asia, and through a
" pious effort

" I would have revenged the long captivity of the
" holy tomb.

" Richlieu, the great Richlieu, the foul of my
" exploits,

" Carried into all parts my arms and my laws,

" And gave all the brilliancy to the rays of my
" glory.

" In

“ In fine, he erected for me this pompous
“ monument,
“ Where to render to his name memory for
“ memory,
“ I desire that with mine it may live for ever.”

There never was a viler piece of bombast than this. How different from the noble simplicity and truth of the ancient Greek and Roman monuments? And yet, they have an academy for inscriptions at Paris.

LETTER XXIX.

Paris, July 20th.

I AM informed that the French government manufacture all the gun-powder used in the kingdom, which monopoly is a most excellent method of keeping the people in obedience, and maintaining the absolute authority of the king. The government also manufacture the nitre with which the gun-powder is made. At the arsenal in Paris, there is a great manufactory for the purification of this kind of salt; and the snowy piles of nitre crySTALLIZED in semispherical masses make a most beautiful and brilliant appearance. This salt is extracted from the old plastering and rubbish of kitchens, stables, and such places where a number of animals have

have lived for a considerable time. In the south of Ireland, the peasants build their huts and cabbins with mud-walls; and as the soil of that part of the island is in general a calcareous marl, I think that the old mud-walls would afford an abundance of nitre, and I wish the experiment were tried. In the purification of the nitre at the king's manufactory in Paris, a sea-salt in considerable quantity is separated from it. This I am informed, they are obliged to cast into the river; for the manufacturing of sea-salt, though monopolized by the government, is let from time to time to some of the farmers-general, who make the most of it they can, oblige the king's manufacturers to destroy that sea-salt, which they separate in the purification of the nitre; and in some of the maritime parts of the kingdom will not permit the miserable peasants to make use of

the sea-water for salt, the right of human nature, but oblige them to purchase their salt from the king's officers at an exorbitant price. The salt manufactured by government, is called *sel de gabelle*; it is truly abominable, for besides being of a dirty brown colour from the sand, clay, and earth which it contains, it is by no means a marine salt, but consists of at least half a dozen different neutral, alkaline, and terrestrial salts, confounded together; so that the chemists find it one of the most difficult things in the world to analyze. The gabelle, or excise upon salt, affords a very great revenue to the French government: And salt has been an object of taxation, not only there, but in almost every nation in Europe. This excise upon salt, very much oppresses the lower class of people in France; yet it is not, in my opinion, so ruinous, impolitic, and

and partial a tax, as the *corvée* and the *taille*. The *corvée* is an old institution, by which the peasants are obliged to labour a certain number of days in the year, to repair the public roads; for there are no turn-pikes in France. The *taille* is a sort of capitation, which all the peasantry are obliged to pay; but from which the nobility are exempt. The *corvée* is a remnant of Gothic vassalage, and is a most cruel, and impolitic oppression on the labouring poor. I am inclined to think, it was once existent in England; for there are some vestiges of it even at the present day; but do not appear to be any way burthensome on the peasants.

LETTER XXX.

Paris, July 23^d.

I HAVE been to see a most dreadful spectacle, a man broke alive upon a cross: which they call breaking on the wheel. At about four of the clock in the evening I went to the place de greve where public executions and rejoicings for the birth, &c. of any of the royal family are continued to be performed. There was a very great multitude of people assembled together, and in the midst of the place was erected a wooden stage. I got up into a high window, from which I had a commanding prospect of this frightful business. On the scaffold was laid horizontally a large wooden cross, much in the form of a Roman X. This cross was marked with eight square notches,

notches, two on each extremity, and about five inches in depth. On this cross, I was informed, the condemned prisoner was to have his limbs broken and be put to death. At one end of the scaffold a small coach wheel was horizontally placed upon a perpendicular axle-tree or post. On this wheel, I was told, the body of the prisoner was to be left exposed, after having been broken on the cross. In a short time the unhappy prisoner arrived, in company with the executioners, and conducted by a party of the horse guards of the police, or *guet-à-cheval*. The prisoner with the executioners went into the town-house, where they remained for about half an hour. The prisoners are conducted to the town-house to be examined for the last time; and there I suppose this prisoner was put to the torture; for on coming out, he was unable to

to walk, and was borne up by two troopers. Arriving at the scaffold, three executioners dressed in a genteel and fashionable stile, handed the prisoner up the ladder with seeming politeness and civility. Having ascended the scaffold, he knelt down and prayed for some time with a clergyman in a black cassock, whose conduct on the whole appeared decent, pious and proper. After praying for some minutes, the prisoner suffered the executioners to take off his clothes. He then layed himself on his back upon the cross, and stretched out his legs and arms along its extremities; while an executioner fastened down his limbs with straps and buckles.

Here I turned my eyes from this frightful spectacle, and beheld the whole place covered with a multitude of people, with their faces all turned to the scaffold:

scaffold : and strange as it may appear, the greater number were women. It is amazing, how the more delicate part of the creation, whose feelings are so exquisitely tender and refined, should come in crouds to see so bloody a spectacle : Yet without doubt, it is the pity, the kind compassion which they feel, that makes them so anxious about the tortures inflicted on our fellow creatures.

The noise of the multitude was like the hoarse murmur caused by the waves of the sea breaking along a rocky shore : For a moment it subsided ; and in an awful silence, the multitude beheld the executioner take up an iron bar, and begin the tragedy, by striking his victim on the fore arm, which being placed immediately over one of the notches, was by the blow of the bar, smashed and crushed down into it. He next struck
one

one of the legs in the like manner, and crushed the bones and flesh at one blow into the notch. He then broke the fore arm in the same manner ; then a thigh, next an arm, after that the other thigh, and concluded by breaking the remaining arm. The priest who still continued with the dying man, knelt down, praying with him, and giving him such consolation, as in such cases can only be drawn from conscious innocence, or a lively hope of Divine mercy, and being shortly translated to a happier existence. A halter had been fixed round the neck of the prisoner, the end of which the executioner pushed through a small hole in the scaffold, which hole immediately corresponded to the back part of the prisoner's neck when extended on the cross. All the limbs of the prisoner being broken, the executioner looked at his watch and let the prisoner remain

remain

remain in that deplorable situation for some minutes according to his sentence. The time being elapsed, an executioner under the scaffold fastened the extremity of the halter to a windlass. He then waited for about a minute, when on a signal given by the principal executioner, he began to turn the windlass, and gave the ropes some violent tugs, such as must have dislocated the vertebræ of the prisoner's neck. During this transaction the other executioner on the scaffold again took up the iron bar, and gave the prisoner three most violent blows upon the belly and stomach, such as must have burst the heart, arteries, stomach, diaphragm, and intestines, and confounded them into one mass of blood and wounds. After some time, the priest descended from the scaffold. The prisoner being sentenced to remain upon the cross until he was absolutely dead, the executioner
still

still remained upon the scaffold, frequently extending the fingers of the prisoner, to know if they would contract, and shew that the man was still alive. In about a quarter of an hour, the executioner unbuckled the straps which had bound the prisoner's body to the cross. He then took in his arms the mangled body, which was most frightful to behold, every limb being broken and distorted. He then placed the body on its back, upon the small coach wheel which was fixed on a post at one end of the scaffold: and letting the head hang down, fastened the body, by twisting the broken and bleeding limbs among the spokes of the wheel, and then having turned the wheel about, left the body exposed in that hideous form, and descended from the scaffold.

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LETTER XXXI.

Paris, July 24th.

I ADMIRE and pity the brave and unfortunate Paschal Paoli, and his gallant Corsicans, who so long struggled for their liberty and independence. I esteem them especially for that noble pride possessed by them all to a man, that not one could be found amongst them, though ever so poor and wretched, to condescend to be a public executioner; and they were obliged to get their hangmen from foreign countries, for the very criminals would not accept of life on such abominable terms. I think from my soul they deserve our admiration for it: for it is impossible, to conceive an idea of an employment, which ought to appear more odious to the eyes of a man, than

than to live by putting his fellow creatures to death. Yet in France, the office of hangman is really a respectable employment. His revenue is considerable, and hereditary in his family; his eldest son always succeeding him in the title and dignity of *l'exécuteur de la haute justice*. I am informed, that the hangman of Paris keeps an open table at his hotel like a nobleman of the first fashion. When any of the hangmen from the provincial towns come to Paris, they generally go to pay their respects to the hangman of Paris. They give him the title of Monsieur de Paris, and he gives them the title of Monsieur de Caen, Monsieur de Toulouse, de Lions, &c. according to the places in which they practise. To compliment a stranger of the same business in a particular manner, he suffers him to break a criminal upon the wheel in Paris, which
is

is esteemed a very great compliment. This is making a jest of the most villanous thing in the world, and thereby approving it : but in this country they make a jest of almost every thing. It was never customary for the hangman of Paris to have a coach : yet some time ago, he thought he had as good a right to have one as those of an equal fortune, and therefore petitioned the parliament for permission to have a coach. The judges could not but feel their pride somewhat wounded, on considering, that if they granted his request, they should see the coach and retinue of the hangman, drive on the Boulevards, and to the opera, jostling along-side of the carriage, perhaps of their premier president, of a prince, or an archbishop : and therefore they refused to accede to his request. He a second time petitioned, and urged his demand with all the interest

interest of his friends. The parliament then replied, that they would permit him to drive in a coach, or what other vehicle he pleased, provided, he would have emblazoned on his carriage a halter, wheel, ax, &c. being the arms most suitable to a hangman, and by which his coach might every where be known. He refused to accept of a coach on such humiliating terms, and remained as he was before. Had he consented to have such an emblazonry on his coach, it would be a most scandalous satyr upon heraldry in general.

The tribunal of the Inquisition was established in France in the reign of St. Louis. The French have abolished the inquisition, although they retain the torture and the punishment of breaking on the wheel: yet if we consider their *procès criminel*, it must appear altogether a
real

real inquisition. From the time the prisoner is apprehended, until he is examined by the judge, he is confined *en secret*, is not permitted to write to his friends, nor to a lawyer, nor receive any letter, nor have any communication with any one whatever. Thus he is deprived of the means of making his defence, of procuring his witnesses, of consulting a lawyer; and his antagonists in the mean time, have every opportunity to attack and circumvent him without being opposed face to face to him and his witnesses. If we consider that the judges are not men chosen for their integrity and virtue, but mercenaries who buy and sell their employments, their criminal jurisdiction must appear horrible to a man born to liberty and independence. I have repeatedly seen in the parliament house, or rather court of judicature at Paris, several of the judges
huddled

huddled up in their cloaks, and absolutely asleep and snoring on the bench, while the lawyers would make the hall re-echo to their vociferous harangues in their clients' causes : and the one half of the judges would appear to know nothing of the affair, until roused by their companions to give their votes to the verdict ! I cannot say that I ever saw this in a criminal trial ; for it is not as in England, where the accusers and the accused appear face to face in open court, in the face of day, of all the world ; but the whole affair is carried on in the darkest secrecy, and the public know nothing of the proceedings, but all is covered with a veil of mystery and darkness. One cannot expect so much impartiality in such judges, as in the breasts of a jury composed of his equals, and who are acquainted with the life and morals of the accusers and accused. In

Eng-

England, criminals every day escape, the evidence not appearing sufficiently clear against them, who inevitably would be condemned to death by a French judge. One of the most virtuous of the Roman emperors used to say, that it were better an hundred guilty should escape, than one innocent person be put to death. Yet many of the French judges seem to think the very reverse. The case of the young girl wrongfully condemned to death at Caen, and the execution of Calas at Toulouse, with many other examples I could extract from the French annals, shew how much prejudice and private interest can sway a bench of mercenary judges. I am told that a mass is said here every day, for the soul of a poor servant girl, who was barbarously condemned to death and executed, on suspicion of having stolen a little cross set with jewels from
her

her mistress. Some time after the poor creature had been publicly executed, the little cross with some other baubles, were found by some flators on the roof of her mistress's house, having been conveyed to that place by a pet magpie.

What is absurd and unjust to the last degree, is, that the crimes of the parents should be punished in the children; as if common sense was not sufficient to convince any one, that an innocent babe in justice and honour ought not to be responsible for the guilt or errors of his father or mother. Yet if a person be condemned and executed in France, his whole family are looked upon as being immersed in the same guilt, become dishonoured, and rendered incapable of bearing any manner of employment under the government. And not one of them can be admitted into holy orders,
and

and they must live in ignominy and shame for the rest of their lives. To add to this the very essence of absurdity, if the criminal happens to be beheaded and not hanged, his family do not become dishonoured thereby, be the crime ever so abominable.

LETTER XXXII.

Paris, July 25th.

IT is astonishing that France which boasts itself to be the most civilized and polite of all the nations in the world, should be almost the only place, where the custom of putting criminals to the torture is as yet retained. The French say, to palliate this, that the torture is not at present so frequently used, as in former times; and that they have abolished *la question préalable*. For the honour of human nature, I should not believe that ever such a horrible absurdity as *la question préalable* could have been employed in the jurisprudence of any country, if I had not the most unquestionable historical proof to convince me of it. Is there any thing in the world
more

more cruelly unjust and shameful, than to force a man by torture, to confess himself guilty, and inform against others, before he is found guilty himself? Though they do not at present put a man to the torture on suspicion alone, yet they frequently put their criminals to the rack after condemnation, to force them to allow the justice of their sentence and inform against others: and the unhappy wretches seldom hesitate to own and declare, every thing proposed to them, hoping the sooner to be relieved by a kind death from their sufferings. I am told, that it is not an uncommon thing to see criminals carried to execution here, incapable of either walking or sitting up, having all their limbs dislocated by the torture.

When a criminal is on the rack, he is now and then questioned in the intermissions and accesses of his agonies by three counsellors, two of whom are called *evan-*

gelifs. Some criminals are found to suffer a confession to be extorted from them, only in the very excess of pain and torment, while others who baffle all their skill in the first trial, will confess through fear of another.

What appears to me the most odious in this matter, is the variety of methods used in France for giving the torture: for in almost every town they have a different manner of putting their criminals to the rack: as if they delighted in making experiments of every kind of torment it were possible to inflict on their fellow creatures.

At Autun and Bonne in Burgundy, the question is given, by putting the legs of the criminal into a kind of iron boots, and pouring in scalding oil between the flesh and the iron continually, or with intermissions, according to the fancy of the evangelists.

At

At Strasbourg in Alsace, they tie the prisoner naked upon a table, and by means of a pipe, let fall from a considerable height cold water on the crown of the head, or on the stomach of the unhappy sufferer. One may at first suppose this to be a gentle punishment; but I am informed, that there cannot be any torture superior to it: for the continual dropping of the cold water after some time, occasions the most exquisite agony.

In some other places in France, they bind the legs and thighs of the criminal between two beams of oak with strong cords, and then with mallets drive wedges of wood between the knees; by which operation the large extremities of the bones at the knees are violently pressed, and the nerves being there collected and very large, and having no muscular flesh to defend them, suffer very great violence and afford most horrible pain.

In other parts of France they fasten the criminal in an iron chair, and making a fire all round him roast him alive. The extreme heat generally makes him fall into a dozing lethargy: but the ingenious French have contrived a kind of iron forks, which they fasten to the prisoner's breast in such a manner, that when he begins to dose and nod his head, he feels himself spurred and pricked by them under the chin, which make him suddenly draw back his head, and recall his drowsy spirits to feel his torments in a more effectual manner.

At Dijon in Burgundy, when they give the question, they tie together the prisoner's wrists behind his body. To the wrists they fasten a rope, which they pass through a pulley at the ceiling, and then bringing down the other extremity, fasten it to a windlass. When the evangelists turn the
windlass,

windlafs, the prifoner perceives his hands to be drawn up to the back part of his head. On turning the windlafs fomewhat more, he finds himfelf abfolutely elevated from the ground, the whole weight of his body depending upon his wrifts tied together. They then roll a fmall piece of linen round his great toe, and faften it with thread; this is neceffary to prevent the rope which they afterwards tie to it from flipping. They then hang by a rope to his great toe one hundred and fifty pounds weight for the ordinary queftion, and two hundred pounds weight for the extraordinary queftion. The windlaf is then turned, until the miferable creature abfolutely bears up the weight from the ground. His foulder-blades appear almoft feparated from his body, and the bones at the articulations of the wrifts, elbows, knee, and ankle, are dragged from one another, fo as remarkably to in-

crease the length of the body. They then unturn the windlass and let him fall down with a jirk : at the very instant, his bones at the joints are drawn back by the elastic spring of the muscles and tendons, and flap together with loud and violent shocks, which dart through the whole frame the most inexpressible agony. They then draw him up higher and higher, letting him fall down each time with sudden velocity ; until finding him persevere, they draw him up with the weight suspended to his great toe to the very pulley at the ceiling ; but he is then generally so overcome by the torments, that he is seized with a violent fever, which renders him stupidly insensible, or sets him to sleep.

There are other methods of giving the torture used in different parts of France, and of which I am ignorant, but these few are sufficient to give you an idea of the
admini-

administration of what they call *la justice Françoise*. What refinement of cruelty! What fertility of invention! And these are the people who call Britons the savages of Europe!

I pride myself on being an Irishman, when I think that even in the remotest ages of barbarity, we never would suffer such abominations amongst us. On the contrary, our *Brehon* laws were the most lenient in the universe. A man was never corporally punished for any crime whatever: nor did the government think themselves authorised to cut off a man from society, because he had killed another; but obliged him to make restitution, and pay a fine according to the nature of the offence. If a man under his own roof murdered another, it was looked upon as one of the greatest of crimes, and the basest breach of hospitality; and therefore on

conviction, his estate and money were all forfeited, and himself banished, but by no means put to death. If a man killed another on the sabbath day, or on any other remarkable holyday, he was fined five pounds; if on any other day, he was fined only forty shillings. If a man robbed, stole, or ravished a woman, he was fined forty shillings. If a widow committed fornication, she was obliged to forfeit forty shillings. And a maid for the same fault, was fined ten shillings. Two thirds of these fines were given to the king, and the other to the ^AO, or chief of the clan.

L E T T E R X X X I I I .

Paris, July 28th.

THE multitudes of judges of all kinds, lawyers, attornies, &c. attending on each of the provincial courts of justice in France, is truly astonishing, and an intolerable burthen to the state. They all more or less enjoy considerable emoluments, without being of any real benefit to the nation, without cultivating the earth, promoting manufactures, or in fact, collectively, or separately, being of any more utility to the interest of the community, than monks or friars: though they may flatter the ambition of some individuals, enrich themselves, and transfer the property of one person to another. One may judge of the multitude of gentlemen belonging to the law in France,

France, when in the city of Dijon alone, there are near eight hundred. In proportion, how many must they not be at Paris, and in all the other cities in France?

A lawyer's fee in many of the provincial towns in France, does not exceed half a crown; yet, although there are perhaps four times as many lawyers in France as there are in the British empire, many of them contrive to make fortunes. The fees being so inconsiderable, individuals are tempted to begin law suits for the most trifling affairs; and when once they commence, the lawyers frequently manage them in such a manner, that the parties grow irritated against one another; and finding it almost impossible to withdraw and extricate themselves, plunge still deeper into a very gulph of memorials, clauses, attestations, *ad infinitum*. Besides, the natural fire and hastiness of the French render

der law suits infinitely more common among them than among the graver inhabitants of England. I am informed, that law suits in France are often continued from generation to generation, and both the parties frequently are reduced to ruin, before the termination of the suit. This also has been too often the case in Great Britain and Ireland. Perhaps it would be better for the state that we had no lawyers at all, nor even the greater part of our statutes and laws, than to have them in their present situation. Some individuals would then, perhaps, with impunity, usurp the properties of others, yet, without affecting the state; for whether wealth should remain in the possession of this or that person, it would still be employed in cultivation and trade, and not devoured by lawyers, attornies, &c. who are as great a burthen upon the industry of the peasants, and perhaps possess as much of the national

nal wealth, as did the monks and friars before the reign of Henry VIII.

It would be productive of infinite benefit to the state if our laws were reduced to brevity and simplicity ; but this is an event more to be wished, than expected. Our laws on the contrary are multiplying every day ; and they have now become so infinite, that a lawyer who pays for half his life the most servile attention to this most dry and disgusting of all studies, is not capable of recollecting the one half. Sir Toby Butler used to say, that he could drive a coach-and-six through any act of parliament in the British empire ; and every lawyer of equal abilities may say the same. The only way to remedy this intolerable abuse, would be, in the first place, totally to do away the ancient laws, and form a new code on the most concise and simple

simple principles. In the second place, all civil contests should be determined by a jury as in criminal cases, and the suit should never extend to more than the third sitting. All cases of life and death are determined by juries, and therefore we the more willingly should submit all other disputes to their umpire; for pecuniary matters are of infinitely less consequence than a man's life. Perhaps suits may sometimes be determined by a jury in an unjust manner; yet the property in dispute would never be swallowed up in law; nor the parties kept for years in suspense; nor perhaps would suits be determined in an unjust manner, more frequently than they are at present. How often does not chicanery, interest, and money overcome the truth? How often is a suit determined one way in one court, and on appeal determined

determined in a contrary manner in another?

The principal courts of jurisdiction in Paris, are kept in the *Palais des marchands*; which is a very fine and extensive edifice; but chiefly serves for shew, as all the business is carried on in two or three closets. The principal closet or chamber is worthy of a stranger's attention, on account of its ornaments and decorations. The ceiling is in the richest, yet the most execrable taste: It is one great mass of carving and gilding; forming a profusion of tail-pieces, or what the French call *culs-de-lampes*; offering to the eye, all that Gothic architecture can afford of heaviness and ugliness.

The principal front of the *Palais* is adorned with one of the most splendid, beautiful,

beautiful, and brilliant ornaments that ever was seen in any country whatever : nor is there any thing of the kind in Great Britain and Ireland, that can bear any manner of competition with it. This ornament is a grand iron grate or grille, which extends from the extremity of one of the advanced wings of the edifice, across to the extremity of the other. The bars of the grille represent ancient lances or spears of the most elegant proportion, with the heads and tassels gilt. There are three gates in this beautiful grille, the principal of which is at the center. The pillars at each side of the lateral gates, are formed in a very elegant taste by bars of iron of a dark colour interspersed with gilding. The shafts of the pillars are so contrived, as to represent the faces of the ancient Roman Actors ; which are an ornament very apropos in the front of a court of justice. The central gate is magnificent
and

and superb above description. The delicate foliage and flourishings of the iron, interspersed with the glitter of gold, appear beautiful to admiration. In short, the whole is a profusion of the most exquisite elegance and taste.

LET.

LETTER XXXIV.

Paris, August 1st.

I WAS yesterday with a very agreeable party to see the old Gothic palace of Vincennes, about two miles from Paris. As the day was pleasant and serene, and that part of the country rich and beautiful, we unanimously agreed to walk. Like a sailor tired after a long voyage, quite cloyed with the dreary prospect of the waves, thinks it luxury once more to behold the green hills and woods; so I, after having been for several weeks in Paris, having had my view continually bounded by narrow streets, and my senses almost drowned in the noise and hurry of the town, felt the most agreeable sensations on beholding again the sweet simplicity of nature in the country. The
verdant

verdant tufts of grass glistening with the morning dew, the trees spreading out their branches in all the liberty of rural nature, and the vines opening their leaves to the morning sun, appeared to me more charming than the fashionable promenade of the Palais-royale, covered with crowds of beau monde, and clouds of dust. What added much to the beauty of the scene, was the infinity of hares and partridges which continued to circle round us within a few yards, gazing at, but not daring to venture too near their tyrant, man.

As we descended into a valley, we perceived some of the garde du roi, from whom we learned, that the king was at the chase, and that if we would remain for some time, we could see the diversion. After some time, a number of guards appeared on the hills in many places, and drove a prodigious multitude of hares and partridges

partridges into the center of the valley. The king soon approached, shooting at random; and surrounded by his noblemen, who continually charged his fowling pieces, while he alone slaughtered the game. This is called *la chasse royale*, but is a very different kind of chase, from the driving over ditches and hedges after a fox in Ireland. His majesty, as I am informed, sometimes kills several horse loads of hares and partridges in a day.

I thought the king's diversion very insipid. Surely, said I, he knows not, that the pleasure does not consist in the number of those poor little animals destroyed; but in the exercise, and in that unaccountable rapture a man feels in the pursuit. If his majesty imagines, that the pleasures of the chase consist in the multitude of game which he destroys, I think he would do well, to send his regiments of Swiss guards,
to

to catch all the hares and partridges, which are almost as tame as ducks and chickens about Paris, and bring them in cages to Versailles; where he could massacre them by thousands, without stirring out of his apartments; which would out-do Nimrod, and Samson with all his foxes.

Having passed through a thick wood of oak, the Gothic towers and battlements of Vincennes presented themselves to view. This old palace is surrounded by a broad and deep ditch, and the walls are flanked by several lofty castles. In the center of the court is the chapel; the front of which is almost entirely a window, where the architect seems to have lavished all the fancy of the Goths to make it curious, bold, and whimsical. The windows are adorned with coloured glass, and the whole is a remarkable piece of Gothic architecture. Opposite to the chapel is the principal

cipal castle, which was intended as a citadel to retire into, in case the rest of the works should be taken. It has been used for several years as a state prison of the same kind with the Bastile; but the king for some reason or other, ordered that it should not be used any longer as a prison; and that the prisoners confined in it, should be transported to the Bastile and other state prisons. This castle, which is of very great strength, is surrounded also by a broad and deep ditch; and has no communication with the court, but by a very narrow drawbridge. Immediately on the inside of this ditch, is a broad wall in the Gothic manner, with a dark passage in it all round the castle yard, and embrasures at regular distances. As there are no prisoners at present in the castle, a part of it is open to visitors; and we were not a little happy, to have an opportunity of seeing the interior of a French state prison, without all the horrors

horrors of a *lettre de cachet*. Within the hollow wall is the castle yard, which is not very extensive. The castle itself appears strong, massive, lofty, dark, and awful; and inspired me on entering, with a solemn dread, that I know not how to express.

The stair-cases are all of stone, and spiral, like those in the rock of Cashel, in Ireland. The roof of the castle is nearly flat; and nothing can exceed the art with which the stones are interwoven, and knitted together, for its formation. The apartments of the castle are hideous, and gloomy, and must have been much more so when the iron bars were in the windows. A great part of the castle is not permitted to be seen, and which I judge is too dreadful for public view. Each chamber is made fast by three very thick oak doors, shutting close upon one another; the

the center door always opening in a direction contrary to the two others ; and the inside door covered all over with a plate of iron. Each door is secured on the outside by three huge iron bolts. There are not only three doors to every chamber, but also doors across the stairs in many places.

The walls of the apartments are in many places all over scribbled, with drawings and inscriptions written by the prisoners during their confinement. Many of them are written in old French characters, and with the orthography used in France, above a century ago. I read many of them, and found them mostly to turn upon religious subjects, and the hope of Heaven, as the only solace to men in their desperate situation. In one of the chambers, which was very obscure, and which must have been almost totally dark, when

the iron bars were in the window : I perceived the following lines out of Milton, written with charcoal on the wall.

With the year

Seasons return ; but not to me returns

Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,

Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,

Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine ;

But cloud instead, and ever during dark

Surrounds me, from the chearful ways of men

Cut off.

LET-

LETTER XXXV.

Paris, August 7.

IHAVE frequently seen, particularly in the Luxembourg gardens, many of the ancient officers of the Irish brigades; who like major O'Flagharty, in the comedy of the West Indian, acquired nothing by a life of fighting and war, but a bit of red ribbon to wear at the button-hole. The situation of these gentlemen must be very unpleasant; after having spent their youth and health in the service of France, to be cast off, when old age requires more lenity, to economise their existence on a miserable stipend, far from their native country and relations, without society, and without wives or children, to make them contented in the decline of life. Many of

them who forsook their properties in Ireland, now that the heat of youth is over, repent sincerely, their having deserted their country, their properties, their relations, and friends, urged on by folly and religious prejudice, to fight the battles of the king of France. They cannot but feel an abhorrence for a nation, that has taken every opportunity to push them foremost against their fellow countrymen. For it has ever been the policy of France, to excite perpetual animosities between the English and Irish; and even in the late war, she sent the poor remains of the Irish brigades to fight against their countrymen in the West India islands.

I met a group of these veteran foldiers the other day, in the Luxembourg gardens. They talked in rapture of the various battles and sieges they had fought, and in a manner having shaken off the burthen
of

of old age, would delineate the plans of their encampments and encounters on the sand, and fight their battles o'er again; imagining themselves in all the vigour of youth, and ready to weep on finding it but a dream. I have often heard them recount the whole affair of Fontenoy, where the English army attacked the French, though posted in the most advantageous situation, with forts to defend them on every side; and the rashness of the Duke of Cumberland was on the point of gaining, I may say, already had gained the victory, when the Irish brigades with the French king's household troops, were ordered down to stop the impetuosity of the Britons; and they absolutely turned the day in favour of France. Soon as the English troops beheld the scarlet uniform, and the well known fair complexions of the Irish; soon as they saw the brigades, advancing against them with fixed

bayonets, and crying out to one another in English, *steady, boys! forward! charge!* too late, they began to curse their cruelty, which forced so brave a people from the bosom of their native country, to seek their fortunes like the wandering Jews all over the world, and now brought them forward in the field of battle, to wrest from them both victory and life. Yet it was horrible, to see Irish fighting against English and Irish; I may say, countrymen and relations, in a foreign country, slaughtering one another, for the cause of their common enemy, for the cause of France!

It is worth remarking, that in Monsieur de Voltaire's poem on the battle of Fontenoy, and all the triumphant pieces written upon the occasion, they have forgotten the Irish brigades.

Abbé Mc. Geoghagan, published the first volume of his history of Ireland in
France;

France; but was compelled to publish the second in another country; merely because he mentioned an undeniable fact; that when sixteen thousand Irishmen left their country in a body, after the capitulation of Limerick, on arriving in France, contrary to honour and agreement, the Irish officers were degraded, each lieutenant becoming an ensign, each captain, a lieutenant, &c.

Ireland never reaped any thing from her engagements with France, but ruin and misery. For whenever France found it her interest to disturb the peace of the British empire, she always worked up the credulous Irish to rebellion, and filled our island with blood and horror; at a time, when it was our interest, to join in amity with England, and partake of her matchless constitution. The French have in many instances behaved ungrateful to the

Irish; and experience should at present make us banish all remains of ancient prejudice in favour of a people, who never have had any thing in view during the civil wars in Ireland, but their own immediate political interest.

Count Lally was a character not uncommon among the Milesian Irish: brave even to madness: the warmest friend, and the most inveterate enemy: noble in his deportment, yet overbearing and haughty: hospitable to excess, yet avaricious. Envy of his good fortune made him many enemies, and his imperious disposition made him more; and he fell a prey to their circumvention and schemes. Never was there a more unjust, a more ungenerous, and barbarous proceeding than that against him. Proud in his own worth, confiding in his innocence, he went to face his enemies, and seemed almost to scorn to defend himself.

self. But when he found himself unexpectedly overwhelmed, even ordered to public execution, his passion was more like the rage and fury of a bull, tormented by the dogs than any thing else. And, oh shame! was dragged by force to the *Place de greve*, where felons are broken on the wheel, in the most insulting manner, with a gag in his mouth to prevent him from giving proofs of his innocence, and exposing all the villainy that had been practised against him; and there, while he struggled with all his power to utter his sentiments, was held down, and had his head separated from his body! The brave Lally is no more; and his property is swallowed from his posterity by the farmers-general.

Colonel B*****, who on the demise of his brother, has since succeeded to the estate and title of Baron C****r; at that time commanded in one of the Irish brigades.

gades. He was so much affected at the injustice used to his gallant countryman; that appearing at the head of his regiment, he took the cockade from his hat, and spurned it upon the earth; and solemnly swore, he never more would serve a king and people, who with such ingratitude, so ungenerously sacrificed his friend, and countryman, the brave Count Lally. Although at that time, the family estate was enjoyed by his elder brother, yet with a noble and disinterested generosity of soul, he maintained his word, and withdrew from the service of France.

LET.

LETTER XXXVI.

Paris, August 10th.

THERE are seven or eight houses for the education of Irish divines of the church of Rome in France; two of which are in Paris, the one called the College of the Lombards, and the other the Irish Seminary or Community.

The first of the Irish priests who came to France, was one John Lee, who took refuge in France in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in the year 1578, and brought with him six scholars from Ireland. They were received into the college of Montaigu; but their number soon increasing, they were transferred to the college of Navarre; which after some time they quitted,

ted, to occupy a house in the Fauxbourg of St. Germain, which was hired for them by the president l'Escalopier.

On the ninth of July, 1677, the three Italian cardinals who were the patrons of the college of the Lombards, nominated eleven Irishmen to fill the eleven vacant burfes of their college. This nomination was confirmed by letters patent of Louis XIV. in the month of August following.

The college of the Lombards was originally formed in the year 1333; for eleven Italian students in Divinity; and had been deserted for near a century, when it was bestowed upon the Irish.

In 1707, Lewis XIV. by arrêt of his counsel, ordered, that this college, and the properties of it, should be equally divided between the Irish priests and the scholars.

scholars. This separation did not take place until 1776, when the Irish scholars went to occupy a neat and convenient house, built for them by Abbé O'Kelly, who was their superior at that time, and who also purchased for them a house and pleasant garden in the country, at a village called Ivry, where they spend their vacations.

As to the Irish priests, that is to say, those who being priested in Ireland, come to make their studies afterwards; they as yet occupy the old college of the Lombards.

The college of the Lombards is situated, with many other colleges, in the university quarter of the town: it is in a very wretched and ruinous state, and the streets and houses about it are old and tattered. The chapel of the college is the only remarkable

markable thing about it, the front of which is really a very pretty, and a most singular piece of architecture. On the altar is an Assumption painted by Jeaurat, there is likewise a small library belonging to the house.

The number of priests in the college of the Lombards, generally amount to an hundred. They were for a long time governed by four superiors, one for each province in Ireland, and one of them in his turn always elected principal superior for life, in imitation of the ancient government of Ireland. Those four superiors were under the direction of the archbishop of Paris, who some time ago thought proper to dissolve this form of government, and nominated one superior alone to rule in place of the four.

The priests of the college of the Lombards are in general men of above twenty
years

years of age. They go to study every day with the French pupils of the college of Graffins: but are not obliged regularly to attend their class. Many of these priests are hired almost every day to say masses in private families, &c. by which, with the revenues of their college, many of them are maintained; but at any rate, they are in a far more respectable light than they were in Paris half a century ago.

The house inhabited by the Irish scholars, called the Irish Seminary or Community, and which was built by Abbé O'Kelly, is neat and convenient, and perhaps more so than any of the colleges in Paris. The chapel built under the direction of Mr. Belanger, is pretty, yet simple, being only a spacious hall, occupying the under floor of one entire wing of the house. Over the chapel is the library, which is very neat, and somewhat considerable.

Those,

Those, who on entering this house, have not a competent knowledge of the Latin language, are obliged to study it before they begin any other course. These low classes are called *humanity*. After this they begin a course of philosophy, at which they continue for two years. The first year they dedicate to logic, metaphysics, and morality, and the second year to mathematics, and experimental physics. After these studies, they spend three years at theology, unless by special favour they are priested, and permitted to return to Ireland.

The students in the low classes and philosophy, go regularly to class at the college of Plessis, where they study with the French students. At the college they are separated into different classes, in distinct apartments, with a professor to each. In philosophy, the first office in class is to write

write during the space of an hour, whatever the professor reads to them of his own composition in logics, metaphysics, or whatever it may be. The professor then calls upon whatever individual he pleases, to make him answer to various questions, and reason upon the subjects he had proposed. In this manner the students lose an hour every morning, and also another hour every evening, fervilely copying whatever their professor thinks proper to dictate. This custom, in all probability, originated when printing was very little known, and the professors through an unaccountable obstinacy still retain it.— For misdemeanors in class, the students are punished, by being forced to stay whole hours upon their knees, and sometimes by being stripped, and scourged by a porter, called for that purpose from the street, and whom the student is obliged to pay for his trouble. For misdemeanors in their
femi-

feminary, they are punished by stoppages in their meat and drink, which is a very base custom, especially as they are compelled to live on a very spare diet. During dinner, one of the students gets into a pulpit, and reads a passage from the lives of the saints or some such book; and this lecture continues to the end of a most frugal repast, which is made in the most profound silence. I think these lectures at table, to be tyrannical and absurd; for it is impossible the students can attend to them, and they are a most disagreeable restraint.— They make their own beds, and in their turns attend one another at table. They are obliged to say prayers at five of the clock in the morning, and to hear mass at half after seven; to say prayers before dinner, and after dinner; before supper, and after supper; likewise before class, and after class in the morning, and before class, and after class in the evening. Besides prayers,
con-

confessions, and fasts ; they have another most mortifying institution of a curious nature, called a *retreat*. Each student is obliged to make a particular *retreat*, for the space of eight days, when he receives any of the orders, of which they count five, tonsure, minor orders, sub-deaconship, priesthood ; and the whole seminary annually make a retreat after the vacation. During this retreat for the space of a week, although there generally are from sixty to seventy students in the house, no person is permitted to speak a word, nor to play, or amuse himself in any manner whatever : but they all spend the time in the most gloomy austerity, and in continual religious employment, in prayer and sadness to excess.

By an old institution, they say a catechism every Sunday in the Irish language ; and every Friday translate English into Irish ;

Irish; but what is astonishing, totally neglect the English language. They are neither permitted to read any English authors, nor have any offices in class to teach them this most necessary accomplishment. It is absurd, that men should dedicate so much of their time to the study of the dead languages, and that they should affect to despise that language, in which they are to convey their ideas, in which they are to give instruction to the people, and which is in every respect the most essentially necessary.

It must be confessed, that the Irish, although they speak a language in a manner foreign to their country, do not commit such grammatical errors in discourse as the generality of English. They never use two negatives instead of one, I can't see nothing, don't tell nobody, and such kind of

of gallicisms, which are not uncommon even among the citizens of London. Neither do the Irish ever say, I comes, I goes, we was, you was, &c. And even in the pronounciation they are not always wrong: they generally say *idea*, and not *idear*; *window*, and not *windor*; *posts*, and not *postifis*; *vinegar*, and not *winegar*; *veal*, and not *weal*; *inconvenient*, and not *ill-convenient*, &c.

The Irish manner of pronouncing the letter A in the alphabet, in my opinion, is preferable to that used in England. For as we pronounce this letter sometimes very broad, like *au*, as in the words *fall*, *call*, &c. and much less broad in the words *arm*, *charm*, &c. and as we give it a very different sound from either of the two foregoing manners, in the words *favour*, *native*, &c. I think that as we cannot express

press these three methods of pronunciation, in the alphabetical denomination of the letter; we should pronounce it in a manner that would be a medium between both extremes, and which is precisely the manner in which the Irish pronounce it in the alphabet.

LET.

LETTER XXXVII.

Paris, August 11th.

I HAVE been somewhat particular in my description of the places for the education of Irish priests at Paris, to shew the nature of their studies and customs, and what difference in their manners and principles, and indeed in the manners and principles of the common people, should be expected from their receiving a more liberal education at home under proper restrictions. The Irish are remarkable among the students of the French colleges, for their great abilities and their solid memory and understanding: and every year many of the first prizes given by the university of Paris, are gained by some of the Irish students; which has rendered Irish
genius

genius and learning almost proverbial among the French. Many of them have gained, even the prizes in French amplification; and they unquestionably must possess most uncommon abilities, to be able to bear off prizes from thousands of competitors. Yet, for my part, I do not perceive of what great utility the ardent pursuit of these foreign and scholastic studies can be to a divine in Ireland. I am informed, that in the Irish seminary, there frequently are young men, who by uncommon genius and application, become so well acquainted with the Latin language, as to write and speak it with greater purity than the English tongue; and make every kind of Latin poetry with the utmost facility; and yet are so simple in all other respects, so unlearned in men and things, that a child of London or Dublin would know better how to live.

Studiis

Studiis annos septem dedit, insenuitque,

Libris et curis, statuâ taciturnius exit

Plerumque, & risu populum quatit.

In my opinion it is a most absurd policy for us, to drive the Roman Catholic priests to foreign countries for their education; for the priests in Ireland are the only persons who can give advice to the common people, and restrain their vindictive spirit. We cannot suppose, that the Irish priests who are educated in France, and Italy, and under the eyes of the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal, can always be free from foreign prejudices, and an affection for an absolute government both in church and state. And as a spirit of revenge is natural to man, they must more or less have an antipathy to a government, which forces them to part from their parents, their brothers, and sisters, and pass the flower of their youth in a foreign part

of the world. Were they permitted, under proper restrictions, to be educated at home, they would improve in their manners and morals, and all animosities and narrow hearted prejudices would wear away, by their intercourse with polite company and those of another persuasion. It is a scandal to the nation, that so many Irishmen should be living on the charity of Italians and others, even among our most inveterate enemies, the French. If it ever should be thought prudent to suffer the Irish priests to receive their education at home, I think that the youth of both persuasions should be educated as much as possible together, without any distinction, in schools where it should be counted the greatest unpoliteness to talk on religious matters. But to suffer the youth of the Roman Catholic persuasion to be educated in separate schools, and
the

the youth of the church of England in schools also distinct, must increase the absurd hatred and animosity on account of religion, which has so long distracted our miserable kingdom. The learning of the Greek and Latin languages does not at all interfere with religion; and therefore, there can be no pretence, at least during the time which boys generally dedicate to these studies, for separating them in so illiberal and impolitic a manner. In Ireland, at present, every thing happy and successful is to be expected from unity and concord; and cruel experience ought long ago to have taught us, the folly and absurdity of hating one another on account of religion.

For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Paris, August 12th.

I HAVE been searching the library of the Irish seminary for old Irish manuscripts. There is in the library a collection of types of the old Irish characters, tolerably well cut, and fit for the press, but can be of little service here, as the French government will not permit a private person to possess a printing press of any kind whatever.

In the library I saw a small manuscript, the epistles of St. Paul in Irish verse. I saw in the library, also another copy of the same, dated 1726, with this very odd preface from the transcriber, which I write in English characters.

“ Gab

“ Gab mo leisgeal a leittheoip, os auis
 duibroin mo diobhail, ō o laus mo faopi-
 bhneoipect, ni bhuil agam aet leath-
 lamh.”

Nothing could be more absurd than to
 translate the New Testament, I may say,
 the foundation of Revealed Religion, into
 rhiming verse : yet such was the taste of
 the country and the times. Few of the
 lines in this poem are equal in length ;
 but in general consist of seven, eight, or
 nine syllables. The rhyme is very poor ;
 and some of the concluding words of the
 lines, have but a very trifling similarity of
 sound.

There is but one manuscript in the Irish
 feminary worthy of attention. It is said
 to have been brought to France by King
 James II. when he fled after his pusillani-

mous conduct in Ireland. This manuscript is about the size of one of our family bibles, and the contents are written in black Irish characters with the greatest accuracy on vellum. It is called *Leabhar Leacan*, or the book of families. At the conclusion of the work, some person has written in Old English, a catalogue of the contents of this truly venerable piece of antiquity. Although I cannot answer for the correctness of this catalogue, yet as it may appear worthy of notice, I have transcribed the following, which is all of it that is at present legible.

The contents of *Leabhar Leacan*.

At the beginning of the manuscript, nine leaves are wanting, which, from the contents of the tenth leaf, we guess to have been a description of Ireland, divided
into

into provinces, and the histories of some of the Irish kings and chiefs.

Page

31. Of the descent and years of the ancient fathers.
41. A catalogue of the Kings of Ireland in verse.
43. The genealogies of the principal Irish saints.
44. The genealogies of the Virgin Mary, Joseph, and several other saints.
56. An alphabetical catalogue of Irish saints.
58. A poem on the antiquity of the Irish saints.
60. Several transactions of the monarchs and kings of Ireland.
62. The history of Ugame More, king of Ireland, and of his posterity.
64. O^NNial's pedigree.

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67. The

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67. The several battles of the clan of Cinel Ogen, or tribe of Owen, from Owen Mc.Nial's time, to the time of Murrugh Mc.Nial Mc. Donnugh.

King Nial of the nine hostages, and his family.

69. { Fiacha, son of Nial of the nine hostages, or Nelus Magnus, and his tribe.

71. Leogarius, son of the said Nelus Magnus, and his tribe.

72. The book of Conaught.

78. The book of Fiathrach.

86. The book of Uriell.

93. The book of Leinster.

105. The descent of the Fothards, or the Nolans.

106. The descent of the Deceys, or the OPhelans.

112. The

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112. The coming of Musory to Moy
Creagh.
118. A treatise on the antiquity of Albani,
now called Scotland.
119. The descent of some sects of the Irish
different from the most known
families.
123. The book of Ulster.
148. The book of England.
151. The Uraccept, or a treatise on the
education of youth, written by King
Coinfoilus Sapiens.
163. The genealogy of St. Patrick and
other saints : also an etymology of
the hard words in the treatise.
166. A collection of prophecies.
194. The laws, customs, exploits, and tri-
butes of the Irish Kings.
193. A history of some Irish heroines, and
great women of former times.

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193. A poem about Adam and his posterity.
203. The book of Munster.
231. The etymologies of the names of different territories and places of note in Ireland.
264. The invasions of the clans of the Partholans, Firbolgs, Tuath-de-Danan, Milesians, &c.
286. The lives of all the great men in Ireland, from the time of the Milesians to the time of Dathi Mc. Ffiachrach, king of Ireland.
306. The reigns of the kings of Ireland, from the time of Leogarius, son of Nial of the nine hostages, to the time of Roderick O Connor, monarch of Ireland.

LETTER XXXIX.

Paris, August 13th.

BESIDES the two seminaries of Irish in Paris, there is also an English seminary, and a Scotch college. The Scotch college was founded in 1325 by David, bishop of Murray in Scotland, and James Beautoin or Bethun, archbishop of Glasgów, and ambassador from Queen Mary Stuart to the French court : so that they do not owe their possessions to the charity of Frenchmen. In their chapel is an urn of gilt bronze, which contains the brains of James II. who died at the palace of St. Germain-en-Laye the 16th of September, 1701. This monument was erected at the expence of the Duke of Perth. Though the Scotch college was founded by Scotchmen, yet the

the priests and students are counted true and natural subjects of the French king; and are destined to *make the mission* as they call it in Scotland.

There are three English nunneries in Paris. One of the order of St. Augustin, another of Benedictines, and a third of the Immaculate Conception. It is only in this last convent, that they receive young persons for education.

There is also a house of English Benedictine monks at Paris, in the rue du Fauxbourg St Jaques. The church of this convent is neat and lightsome: it has been repaired some years ago; and is decorated with Ionic pilasters, in the interval of which are arcades. On the great altar is a painting, representing St. Edmond king of England. In one of the chapels
is

is a virgin, painted by Louise de Baviere, abbess of Maubuisson, grand-daughter of James I. king of England.

In this church is the body of king James II. likewise the body of Louisa Mary Stuart, his daughter, who died at the palace of St. Germain-en-Laye, the 18th of April, 1712. The bodies are not interred; and the coffins still remain exposed in funeral pomp; as they were only placed here, until they should be brought to the royal sepulchre at Westminster-abbey. They are hung round with old funeral banners, with coats of arms, and the royal insignia of the Stuarts, all tattered, dark, and full of dust and cobwebs. I never admired the Stuart family; and yet, when I beheld these melancholy remains of grandeur; these antique funeral banners; this unburied majesty; I felt
a damp

a damp upon my spirits; a melancholy affliction, that I want words to express; the memory of old times rushed upon my mind, and even drew tears from my eyes.

LET.

LETTER XL.

Paris, August 20th.

HAVING repeatedly heard of the extreme austerities to which the Cenobite monks at the abbey of *La Trappe*, on the confines of Normandy, submit themselves, I felt a most ardent desire to pay them a visit, and therefore set out for that purpose, and have been highly recompensed for my trouble.

As I approached the abbey, every thing served to inspire me with religious terror. The hills, woods, lakes, and rivulets which surrounded the valley, seemed placed on purpose to sequester those solitary monks from all commerce with the rest of mankind. The very silence seemed awful: a
silence

silence which has reigned uninterrupted for several centuries. The old Gothic buildings appeared more gloomy and solemn than I can express by words. The hollow sound caused by my horse's feet as I entered the gate of the convent, made it appear a ruin long deserted by men.

I saw no person in the yard of the convent; and all appeared a silent dreary ruin. On observing a cord hanging by an old Gothic door, I supposed it to be that of the bell; and therefore began to pull it pretty hard, and at length made the bell to toll; the flat and solemn sound of which, echoed through the long damp cloisters, equalled the universal sadness of the place. After I had waited for some time, I perceived the door to open, and observed a tall, pale meagre figure approach, hideous

as

as a spectre. His head was entirely shaved, except a narrow circle of hair left like a band all round. He wore a robe such as the monks commonly wear, of very coarse white cloth, which reached down to the great wooden shoes he had upon his feet. With his eyes fixed upon the earth, and his hands joined together before his breast, he advanced slowly towards me, and bowing down his head to the earth, put his lips to my shoes. I was not prepared for such a reception, and was at a loss how to act: I could not bear to see a man like myself, demean himself so much. He led me through a long Gothic cloister into a little room; and on my informing him of my business, he told me, that he would go and inform the father abbot, that a stranger was arrived, and wished to see the abbey, &c. He intreated me, to suffer the two persons who should come to receive me,
to

to do with me as they would please; and by all means not to salute, nor even open my lips to them. He also asked me if I had any pistols or other weapons about me; requesting that if I had, I should leave them by, and not profane the abbey by bringing such abominations beneath its roof.

I had remained by myself for some minutes; when I perceived two of the religious, dressed exactly like the former, moving slowly together through the cloister. They appeared pale and emaciated; and held prayer-books in their hands, which they attentively seemed to read. They prostrated themselves before me, and kissed my shoes like the former; and then in a slow and solemn pace, conducted me to the chapel, without saying even one word. On entering the chapel, they kneel-
ed

ed down at each side of me: and made signs to me to do the same. The chapel appeared antique, Gothic, gloomy and dark, with one or two dull lamps, which shed a pale and glimmering light upon the awful ruinous place around. The choir was shut up on every side with planks, so that I could not see into it. The religious were at their devotion within the choir; and I heard them sing, the most mournful and dolorous *cuineaghān* it is possible to conceive. The sounds were sorrowful, and slow; and the hollow voices, at the conclusion of each verse, seemed murmuring to die away, vibrating through the long deep solitudes and awful cells. I felt a chill diffuse itself through my whole frame, and conceived a melancholy terror; such a one as Spencer felt, when he described the cave of Despair in his *Faerie Queene*.

After

After some time, the two religious conducted me back in solemn silence to the little room from whence they had brought me. On entering the room, I forgot myself a little, and could not help expressing my surprize by word of mouth to one of my conductors. But I immediately perceived my imprudence. He bowed his head, and made the sign of the cross upon his breast; and signified by signs, that I was guilty of a profanation by having uttered my thoughts. The other made a sign to me to be seated; when opening his prayer-book, with a most melancholy tone of voice, he read over me a long Latin prayer: after which, they turned from me, and departed. I had not remained many minutes by myself, when another religious entered, and with the politest air in the world, asked me, was there any thing he could do to serve me? I assure
you

you I found it very agreeable, to meet with a man to whom I could speak. He asked me, if I wished to see any more of the abbey? and told me, that my horse was taken care of by one of the religious: and that I should be satisfied to stay in the convent until the next day. He conducted me to see the refectory where the religious dine. In the refectory I saw a number of brown earthen vessels and wooden spoons, which they use at their repasts. He shewed me the dormitories or cells in which they sleep; each cell appeared a most wretched hovel, having for furniture a hard plank, with a straw mat, a pillow stuffed with straw, and a very coarse quilt; on which these sorrowful beings sleep without ever taking off their cloaths. He informed me that they retire to their cells at eight of the clock in summer, and at seven in winter. And that they never
drink

drink wine, or beer, or any other spirituous liquor, nor ever eat any kind of animal food; and live merely on water and some herbs and roots dressed without even butter or oil.

We next went to see the environs of the abbey. Here I saw the greater part of the valley more or less in a state of cultivation; due, as my conductor informed me, to the labour of the monks. They rise at two of the clock after midnight, and remain at prayers in the chapel, until four or five; after which, they work at the spade, harrow, &c. for the space of an hour and a half; and labour in the same manner for another hour and a half after dinner. During their labour they observe the most rigid silence; esteeming it absolute blasphemy to open their lips. Although fatigued by labour, they never
fit

fit down to take rest: which must be extremely mortifying to men, who never drink any kind of fermented liquors, and only take once a day a bit of brown bread, with a cup of water, and a small plate of roots, or herbs, or perhaps *haricots*, or full grown kidney beans, always the produce of their own labour. In the heat of the day when any of the monks finds himself much exhausted from his work, he does not presume to speak, but makes a sign to to the *pere abbé*, by putting his hand to his mouth; on which he generally is permitted to drink a little water.

We next went to see the burial place of the monks. I observed there several wooden crosses, which marked the spots, in which different bodies of the religious were interred. Among the stones and crosses I observed two of the monks, who were digging

digging in separate trenches or graves. My conductor here informed me, that when any of them fall sick, they take no manner of care of themselves, nor have they any physician belonging to the abbey; for they thing it impious to attempt to cure themselves, when God afflicts them with diseases, and wishes to call them from the world. When they perceive themselves near their last moments, they stretch themselves in cinders and ashes, and meet their end with astonishing resolution, even smile in the agony of death. He also informed me, that each of the religious digs the grave in which himself is to be buried; and even some of them sleep in their graves at night: and that the two religious I perceived, were then employed at opening the cold earth for this gloomy purpose.

I approached to view one of these uncommon persons. He appeared to be a
man

man of about thirty years of age: and had something noble and interesting in his mien, though pale and haggard: pining melancholy and dark despair seemed to sit heavy on his brow. He appeared to dig with ardour, wishing his last hour were come, and that the cold earth would open and embrace him for ever. He did not take any notice of me, nor even perceive me, when I approached; for his whole soul seemed engaged in opening his long home. Perhaps, said I, his hands have been stained with the blood of his aged father, or wrongfully suspecting his gentle sister, of dishonouring his family, he has laid violent hands upon her. Or rather, perhaps, his days are embittered by slighted and unhappy love. I thought I saw the unfortunate, the desperate Romeo, tearing open the grave to lay himself by his much loved Juliet. Never in my life

did I see any thing so shockingly sorrowful. I pitied him from my very heart: I felt my eyelids swell with tears—I turned from him, and gave vent to my grief.

LET.

LETTER XL.

Paris, August 21st.

ON returning to the cloister with my friend the monk, he told me many things respecting these solitary mortals. He said, that two brothers had lived in the abbey for twelve years, without knowing that they were together; so rigidly is their silence and other austerities observed; until the elder brother at confession declared to the father abbot, his regrets and tears for the salvation of his brother, who he had left exposed to the temptations of the world. The father abbot was so affected with this incident, that he brought him to his brother, and permitted them to embrace. “Sir, said the gentleman who informed me of all these things, they

forfake and despise the vanities and riches of this world for the pure love of God. They cannot find a stronger testimony of their sense of gratitude and affection to the Almighty, than thus voluntarily to undergo these temporary mortifications, determined to brave all manner of woes for the love of God. And as they have their eternal happiness in view, are they not truly wise, to sacrifice to the adoration of our Heavenly Father, this miserable life, which is a mere nothing in comparison to an eternity of glory? Would to God, that I could have the grace, to persuade you, to turn your eyes from the false and sensual pleasures of this life, and dedicate a pure and contrite heart to the love of God; to the adoration of that Being of Beings, who promises to us, unworthy mortals, infinite joys hereafter. You seem, young stranger, to have a melancholy in
your

your heart; and depend upon it, that if any sin oppresses you, you never will find peace of mind, until you make peace with God; until you lift up your mind from all terrestrial things, and consecrate yourself to God; by a life of mortification and penance." I could not refrain from smiling at this advice. I thanked the good man for his affection; yet could not help telling him, that I thought it would be less pleasing to the Divinity, to mortify myself, than to use, and enjoy the pleasures of this life, which he has so bountifully lavished upon us: that I hoped to be of service to my parents and family; to marry an amiable wife, and get a house full of children. Yet I was sorry for having said so much; for I saw it gave him pain: he cast down his eyes most mournfully, and crossing himself, made me a reverence, and departed.

I observed on the walls of the cloister, dormitories, and refectory, a variety of Gothic adages and sacred inscriptions; such as, *respice finem, silentium perpetuum, &c.* Over the door of the refectory are written these verses:

Quelque herbe cuite au sel avec un peu de pain
Est le seul mets qu'on sert en tout temps sur la
table;

C'est bien peu, mais le corps ne sent pas qu'il a faim.

Quand le coeur vit et se sent plein

De l'amour d'un objet infiniment aimable.

Tired of reading the inscriptions, I was conducted to a chamber, where I met an old monk with a very long beard. He made a sign to me, to sit down to table; and placed before me some *haricots*, an omelet, and a bottle of wine; which are the things with which they entertain such strangers as come to visit the abbey.—

Having

Having sat for some time at table in the most mournful silence, I was conducted by the dumb, long bearded Cenobite, to one of the chambers where the strangers sleep. At two of the clock, after midnight, the same person with his long beard, came to awaken me. He held a lanthorn in his hand, which he shook, at the same time pointing to his knees; but as I had neither curiosity nor devotion enough, to go and spend two or three hours in a damp old church, I answered him in his own language, that is by signs, that I preferred remaining where I was.

The abbey of la Trappe was founded by Rotrou, Comte de Perche, in 1140, in the reign of Lewis VII. on account of a vow he had made when in danger of being shipwrecked, to build a monastery on his return; and to signify to posterity,

the occasion of the foundation, he contrived, that the roof of the entire church should represent the keel of a vessel turned upside down.

In the ancient times of barbarity, the monks of la Trappe were renowned for their religious mortifications, and the austerity of their lives. But in the midst of the civil wars, and the English invasions, they degenerated much from their former mortifications.

Armand-Jean le Bouthillier de Rancé, one of the most gallant gentlemen of his age, had fallen deeply in love with a most beautiful lady, named Madame de Montbazon. On her dying suddenly, he abandoned himself to sorrow and despair. He fled to the most solitary woods, invoking the ghost of the fair Montbazon, with all the

the enthusiasm of unfortunate and romantic love. At length, bestowing his entire fortune to alms-houses and hospitals, he went in a manner to bury himself alive in the monastery of la Trappe; where he established a reformation, and reduced the monks to their primitive austerity, to eternal silence and fasting.

The abbey of la Trappe appears always to have been the retreat of unfortunate and despairing lovers. It was here, the gallant Comte de Comminge, supposing the beautiful Adelaïde to be no more, took refuge, to cheat his sorrows by religious occupations. And here likewise, his fair Adelaïde was soon after admitted in the disguise of a monk, and lived in all the austerity of the abbey. She knew her lover, though disguised in the habit of a monk, and emaciated by grief and morti-

fication : yet the sacred ties of her religion forbade her to reveal herself ; until exhausted by the excessive mortifications and austerity of the place, and distracted by ungovernable and unhappy love, she died, and left the monks in astonishment, to find a female amongst them, and left Comminge, overwhelmed with love, sorrow, and despair. He soon after retired from the convent, and spent the remaining years of his life a solitary hermit in the desert.

The sorrows of the lovely Adelaïde and the Comte de Comminge, have afforded a subject for a tragedy on the French stage.

LETTER XLI.

Paris, August 27th.

SINCE I wrote to you my last letter, I have been to see the chateau of Chantilly, the seat of the Prince of Condé. We could not pass through the city of St. Dennis, without going to see the monuments, and the treasure of the abbey. The church of the abbey on the interior, appears one of the most light and delicate pieces of Gothic architecture that I have seen. It was in this church, that the immortal Henry IV. of France read his recantation. He used to say, that of all the cannons made use of by him, to vanquish the league and gain the crown of France, he found the cannon of the mass, to be the most successful.

The

The abbey of St. Dennis has long been the Mausoleum of the kings of France. But the monuments are by no means equal to those of Westminster abbey: That of Turenne is the most admired. Two emblematical figures in white marble seem to deplore the loss of this great man; who cased in armour, expires between them at the base of a pyramid.

The treasure of the abbey is contained in large buffets all round a room. It consists of golden crosses set with precious stones, several vases of great value, some golden armour, and the crowns worn by the different sovereigns of France. I admired the sumptuousness of the crowns; yet none appeared to me so remarkable as the iron crown of Charlemagne.

Parting from St. Dennis, we arrived early at Chantilly, after passing through a most

most noble forest. The castle is a great pile of Gothic building, with huge round towers at the angles to serve as bastions. The venerable aspect of this groupe of Gothic castles, dark and solemn, in the middle of a fine sheet of water, impresses the beholder with awe and admiration.— It appears antique, solemn and romantic; and the noblest piece of Corinthian architecture does not appear so awful and majestic as the antique walls and ramparts of Chantilly. They recalled to my mind the times of our ancestors, when each fierce baron governed his vassals with absolute sway, and secure in his strong castle, defied the neighbouring lords. Every thing served to instil into my mind a pleasing dread; particularly the hall of arms, and the very armour which was worn in the field of battle by Joan, the maid of Orleans. I almost thought myself enchanted.

chanted many centuries back, and that I beheld the haughty Momorancies armed in compleat steel, furrounded by their hardy vassals, and the knights errant terrible and gallant.

The apartments of the castle are grand, rich, antique, and gloomy. In one part of the castle is a fine museum of antiquities and natural history.

The stable of Chantilly is the admiration of foreigners. It consists of a grand hall arched with stone, and is far more magnificent than any of our churches in Ireland; even a more noble structure than our parliament-house. The two entrances are situated facing to one another at each extremity. On each side are ranged the stalls for three hundred horses, with the name of each beast inscribed over his stall.

High

High over the stalls a gallery bordered with palisades, runs all round this magnificent hall or stable. In this gallery, as I have been informed, the Prince has frequently dined with foreigners of distinction. In the middle of the stable, is a fountain and reservoir, equally beautiful and convenient.

As the grapes are at present nearly ripe, and the vintage approaches, the country must appear charming and delightful; and therefore I have resolved to make an excursion into the province of Burgundy, where I shall remain for the vintage.

LET.

LETTER XLII.

Fountainbleau, August 31st.

I HAVE arrived here, after a most agreeable ride, and have seen every thing remarkable in the palace and gardens.

The palace of Fountainbleau is a great pile of buildings, erected at different times, and for the most part in a very poor taste. The gardens are in the old French geometrical fashion, and in a most neglected and ruinous situation.

What is wanted at Versailles, is in profusion at Fountainbleau. Forests, rocks, and waters, seem to have agreed to meet here, to form, I may say, a miracle of beauty, in the wild rurality of the situation.

tion. It is one of these happy spots, where Nature shews herself truly inimitable, and infinitely superior to art,

— For nature here,
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art, enormous blifs.

From the windows of the palace the prospects are absolutely enchanting. Immediately under me, I beheld the gardens and ponds; beyond which appeared the forest on every side, and great pieces of water here and there shining among the woods and hills. The forest moved by the wind, resembled the sea in eternal motion, with waves succeeding waves; beyond which a chain of hills terminated the view, with their naked summits rising above the woods and encrusted over with
innu-

innumerable little rocky pyramids. The evening sun, which seemed to descend behind the hills, diffused a golden blush through the heavens, and added a beautiful grandeur to the scene.

LET.

L E T T E R X L I I I .

Dijon, September 8th.

I AM now at Dijon in Burgundy, which was anciently the residence of the Dukes, before this province became united to the dominions of the French crown. Dijon is the capital of the province, is a very neat and pretty town, and contains above twenty thousand inhabitants.

The city is nearly circular, and is fortified with ramparts, bastions, ditches, and outworks. The ramparts of the body of the place are planted with trees, and make a most agreeable walk of about a French league all round the town, commanding a very fine prospect of the adjacent country.

try, and particularly of the chain of hills called the *Côte*, on which are produced some of the best wines in the province.

Besides the walks upon the ramparts, the citizens have two or three other very agreeable ones. Yet I think that so many public walks have an inconvenience; for the companies are separated upon them, which cannot be so sociable, as if they were united upon one.

The inhabitants of Cork have reason to boast of their Mardike walk. The situation and prospects are uncommonly beautiful; yet I imagine, they would appear to much more advantage, if the walk were unequally serpentine, and planted with different kinds of trees, which would afford more variety, and some of them retain their verdure all the winter. This
would

would be more agreeable to the modern taste in gardening, and indeed to nature. At the end of this beautiful walk, instead of an obelisk for the eye to rest upon, which would not at all hide a fine rural prospect of the river and hills; they have built a great heavy house across, which very much resembles an hospital or a charity school, and the walk before it an avenue. Probably it was the same architect who built the gaols of the same town: for they somewhat resemble Mardike tavern, being built across the way, to obstruct the prospect, and a free current of air, which must be peculiarly noxious in a city like Cork, built upon marshes, the air foggy, and at certain times corrupt by the effluvia from all the blood and offals of the beeves killed during the season of slaughtering. I cannot conceive what could have tempted the architect to build the gaols in such a situa-

a situation, like the Châtelet at Paris. If he intended them as ornaments to the city, he must have been egregiously mistaken; for a prison is always a place of horror, the habitation of the most miserable of mankind, and can never appear a pleasing spectacle to a man of humanity.

We have some very fine public buildings in Dublin, and the persons who planned them, most unquestionably must have possessed both taste and genius: yet it must be confessed, that at present the generality of our architects are most intolerable bunglers, and have not any idea of the exquisite morsels of architecture at Rome and other places abroad. They even make a trade of cheating their employers; and generally compute the expence of a building before hand, after such a manner, that when the work is compleated, the costs
are

are frequently found to amount to double the sum which had been proposed. I wish it were possible to establish a school for architecture in Ireland. Into such a school, none but young persons should be received, possessing a remarkable taste for drawing from their earliest years; for we may be convinced, that a person who has a taste for drawing, has also a taste for architecture; and in this study, if there be not a natural inclination, a spiritual something, unknown and unpossessed by the generality of men; art can do nothing, it may improve, rectify, and refine a taste, but can never generate taste in any one whatever. I could likewise wish, that such young persons as should be most approved of in the school, should be sent on the public expence, to compleat their studies at Rome, as is the custom of the academy of architecture in Paris. Such
an

an institution would be of great consequence to the state; for after cultivation and commerce, there are few things more worthy of our attention than architecture. It is of infinite convenience to individuals, and when executed in a masterly stile, gives foreigners a most flattering idea of a people, and remains to posterity a monument of taste and magnificence.

Such ladies and gentlemen as go upon the continent, should never leave their native country, without having acquired some knowledge of architecture: for the fine buildings upon the continent are among the principal curiosities worthy of being seen and remembered, and without some notion of architecture, a person cannot feel even half the pleasure that he otherwise would, on seeing these beautiful edifices.

Now,

Now, that I talk of architecture, I cannot help mentioning, the tall slender round towers which are still to be seen in many parts of our island. Of all the buildings in the world they are the simplest, and at the same time not without beauty and proportion. It is disputed by Sir James Ware and others, for what use they were intended, and in what age, and by what people they were erected. Some antiquarians have supposed that they were intended for belfreys; and others have pretended that they were the retreats of certain hermits, or religious anchorets: but neither of these suppositions to me appear probable.

From the narrow windows all round, and rising at certain intervals, it is evident that there were spiral flights of wooden stairs in them to the very top. At the top of each of the round towers, the win-

dows are different in form and position from the lower ones, being considerably larger, to the number of four, and situated on a level exactly opposite to one another. These, with other considerations, induce me to think, that they were intended for beacons, or light-houses; and being very tall and remarkable edifices, they were the best means that possibly could be devised, for the direction of travellers both by day and night, in a country over-run with woods, and without highways or roads.

Some persons imagine, that if they were intended for light-houses, they always would have been built upon hills, and not seemingly at hazard as they are. Yet I should be very much surprized, if they were always situated upon elevated places. For they were not intended to
diffuse

diffuse a light like the lamps in a city, but to serve as signals to direct people to a town, to the residence of a chief, or to a fair, which most certainly were not always upon the summit of hills.

There is one of these round towers upon the rock of Cashel. Like the others it is very tall, and diminishing in its diameter as it rises like the shaft of a pillar, and is surmounted by a conical roof of stone. On the whole appearing grand, yet simple, and without any of those whimsical sculptures and futile ornaments, with which the Gothic architecture so very much abounds. Near to this round tower is a most remarkable edifice, called by the people of the place, King Cormick's Hall; probably from Cormack, one of the old Irish chiefs, who resided there about the beginning of the tenth century, two hun-

dred and seventy years before the English invasion. King Cormack's hall is built of free-stone, a stone not common in that part of the country; but the old cathedral adjoining to it, is built of a blue lime-stone, and is evidently of a much more modern date. As there is no part of the building made of free stone, but King Cormack's hall, and the round tower; as the stones of both appear to have been cut in the same manner, with a hatchet; and as the round tower corresponds to the castles on each side of King Cormack's hall, I think it is more than probable, that they were built at the same time. Now, if it is possible to determine, in what age King Cormack's hall was built; I think, we may know to what people, and to what time we are indebted for these beautiful edifices, the Irish round towers.

King

King Cormack's hall does not in any respect, resemble the Gothic buildings.— It is built in a most singular manner, without a foundation, and yet is so firm, as to stand to the present time. The arches are very neat, and all semicircular; but not one of them, nor any part of the edifice, in the ogee fashion of the Goths: which shew, that it must have been built before the Irish became acquainted with Gothic architecture. Whether Cormack's hall was intended for a Heathen, or Druidical temple, or for the assemblies of the Irish chiefs, I cannot determine; but think, that when it was in repair, though not very extensive, it must have appeared really splendid and grand.

Originally, besides the doors in Cormack's hall, there were but two or three very small perforations to admit light;

dred and seventy years before the English invasion. King Cormack's hall is built of free-stone, a stone not common in that part of the country; but the old cathedral adjoining to it, is built of a blue lime-stone, and is evidently of a much more modern date. As there is no part of the building made of free stone, but King Cormack's hall, and the round tower; as the stones of both appear to have been cut in the same manner, with a hatchet; and as the round tower corresponds to the castles on each side of King Cormack's hall, I think it is more than probable, that they were built at the same time. Now, if it is possible to determine, in what age King Cormack's hall was built; I think, we may know to what people, and to what time we are indebted for these beautiful edifices, the Irish round towers.

King

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Originally, besides the doors in Cormack's hall, there were but two or three very small perforations to admit light;

which makes it appear probable, that they were unacquainted with glass in Ireland, when this was built.

The edifice is adorned with an immensity of sculpture, both within and without. Over the principal entrance, charged with a profusion of zigzag work, which though somewhat heavy, is executed with a great deal of taste; is the representation of a *centaur*, discharging an arrow from his bow at a lion, or some more monstrous animal. But on any part of the building, either on the inside or on the outside, there is no figure, which bears the smallest resemblance to a cross, or to any thing Christian. Around one of the principal arches is a very uncommon ornament, being a continued row of the representations of the heads of men, horses, bulls, &c. which appearing very conspicuous, gives

gives the place much the air of something heathen and idolatrous.

The three-quarter pillars placed over the small arcades within, are surmounted by capitals, which bear some resemblance to the Ionic. And some of them are carved like the heads of men, lions, &c. The whole building bears a striking resemblance to the Eastern architecture, before it was reduced into orders by the Greeks: which I have been induced to think, by inspecting the plans and pictures of the ruins in lower Egypt. This similitude in the architecture makes me imagine, that there is some foundation for what Doctor Keating has transcribed, relative to colonies from Scythia and Egypt having invaded Ireland. At any rate, this edifice is the most remarkable antiquity in the kingdom, be it of the ancient Celts or whom

it may, and most certainly deserves to be preserved from its present state of ruin.

Lewis XIV. offered a reward to any person who should invent another order of architecture, independent of the five; and no person could be found capable of inventing another. Now, I think, that if there seems to have been any other order of architecture in the world, besides those universally known, it must be very worthy of our attention. And the zigzag work with which this particular stile of architecture abounds, is not unworthy of a more refined age; and would appear to much advantage in the architecture of bridges, and grottos, orangeries, and buildings of a similar nature in gardens, &c. I have heard, that there is a piece of architecture in Scotland, attributed to the ancient Celts. I wish some person may
com-

compare the plans and architecture of it with King Cormack's hall, which probably may throw some light upon the subject.

In fine, I am of opinion, that the round towers in Ireland were intended for beacons or light-houses; and that they have an origin prior to the introduction of Christianity or Gothic architecture in the island.

LETTER XLIV.

Dijon, September 10th.

RICHES are distributed almost as unequally in France as they are in the south of Ireland. The nobility live in affluence and luxury, and the peasantry are poor and oppressed. Yet luxury has been very little known among the nobility of France, till within these two last centuries. The ancient barons, and even kings, lived immersed in strong castles, full of dark and narrow passages, and surrounded by ditches: in short, their dwellings were not much more commodious than modern dungeons, as we may see by their ruins at the present day.

I have observed several Gothic castles, scattered through the provinces of Champagne

paign and Burgundy. They are in general built after the same model. The main part of the castle is a square or parallelogram, with two round castles at the extreme or opposite angles. Thus the two other angles become salient angles, raked by the fire of the two round castles, which serve as bastions. The points of these salient angles are also further secured by the Gothic jet-outs or machicoulis, which are not uncommon over the angles and gates of ancient castles, and through which stones, &c. could be thrown down upon the assailants, in case they should approach to break through the wall. This form of building appears most singularly awkward, yet is extremely ingenious: and I do not believe, that any engineer in the universe could devise a thing more effectual and simple, to fortify a single house, without going to far greater expence. For it would
be

be impossible equally well to defend any other figure, with only two bastions.—

Were we even to chuse a triangle, which is a figure with a less number of sides than a square, and endeavour to defend it with two bastions; one curtain would be raked by the fire of the two bastions, while each of the two other curtains would be raked by the fire of only one; and consequently the place would be less defended in one part than in another. Besides, the bastions themselves would be more exposed than the bastions of a square, being situated at the points of acute angles, and consequently not being sufficiently defended by the curtains. If on the contrary, a figure with a greater number of sides than a square should be made choice of; for example, a pentagon, it would be absolutely impossible to defend it with less than three bastions, and consequently a greater num-

number of men ; yet even then, it would not be equal in its defence, being better raked at one side than at any other, and consequently affording an open to the assailants. Thus, on the best and surest principles, no manner of fortification could be chosen more secure and more economical, than the castles I mention. The old castles in Ireland, although much more strongly and solidly built, could never be capable of holding out so well, being in general simply round or square, without any thing like bastions to rake them ; and must have depended for defence on their own simple fire, and that of the outworks. But the old castles of Champaign and Burgundy would be defensible in themselves, even though they should not have any outworks at all.

It is probable, that the fierce barons who lived in these strong castles, were not
accus-

accustomed, like the modern French, to spend the greater part of their lives at the toilet, at table, and at cards. Far from it: they were a hot-headed, hardy, ignorant, superstitious, simple, brave, and hospitable people. In time of peace they amused themselves with tilts and tournaments, covered with iron armour, and with ponderous lances in their hands. Of their hospitality, I need desire no further proof, than the great table knife of one of the ancient dukes of Burgundy, still preserved at the Gardes-meubles in Paris: It shews, that the ancient nobility of France had some things very substantial on their tables.

When Henry III. King of England, was returning home from Gascony, he was received at Paris by St. Lewis, who offered to the English King his choice of the pa-

son with gold and silver lace

place in Paris, or the castle of the Knights Templars, for his residence. King Henry preferred the latter, where he gave a sumptuous entertainment to the King and all the nobility. The castle of the Knights Templars is still in being, and as strong as ever; yet in this age is looked upon, as uninhabitable, on account of the small windows, dark passages, narrow stairs, and stone chambers, more like vaults for interment, than apartments fit for the residence of a foreign prince.

We may have some idea of the simplicity of the ancient French, from a variety of facts, authenticated by their best historians. In the reign of Charles VII. King of France, in the winter of the year 1757, which was so intensely cold, that many persons were frozen to death, the ladies and lords of the court got themselves dragged

ged about in barrels, which were vehicles very different from a modern vis-a-vis. Catherine de Medicis was the first, that ever brought a coach to Paris. There is a letter still preserved of Henry IV. of France, in which he wrote the following to Sully, his minister of state, who was somewhat unwell. *Je comptois aller vous voir ; mais je ne purnai, parceque ma femme se sert de ma coche.* "I intended to go to see you ; but I could not, for my wife is making use of my coach."

Even in England, where I may say all ranks of people at present are pampered with luxury and ease, until within these three latter centuries, the very lords of the realm had not the luxuries of life so cheap, refined, and commodious, as our common mechanics at present. In a book published by the Society of Antiquaries, entitled,

entitled, "Extracts from a manuscript, dated apud Eltam, mense Jan. 22. Hen. VIII." are the following rules, among several others instituted by King Henry VIII. to be observed in the royal household :

Officers of squillery, to see that all the vessels, as well silver as pewter, ashens cups, and leathern pots, be saved and kept from stealing.

All the King's attendants must take care, not to steal any locks, or keys, tables, forms, cupboards, or any other furniture, out of noblemen's or gentlemen's houses, where he goes to visit.

Master cooks shall employ such scullions as shall not go about naked, nor lie all night on the ground before the kitchen fire.

The

The Queen's maids of honour to have
a chet loaf, a manchet, and a gallon of
ale, and a chine of beef for their break-
fast.

Dinner to be at ten, and supper at four.

LET-

LETTER XLV.

Dijon.

THE peasants of Burgundy are in general very poor, on account of the exorbitant and partial taxes levied upon them, and the multitudes of monks and friars, who possess some of the best districts in the province. I have no where seen land better cultivated, than that belonging to the religious; yet it is very impolitic, that what otherwise might be the support of the laborious commonalty, with their wives and children, should be consumed by bodies of men, who lead a life of the most perfect inactivity. Nevertheless, if a number of gentlemen of independent fortune, chuse to gratify a religious inclination,

nation, and live together in all the austerity of a monastery, I do not think, we have any right to prevent them. Yet as such things are inimical to the commonwealth, to industry, and to the propagation of mankind,, we ought to discourage them as much as possible through a political view. I am informed that the monks and friars of this country, are generally persons who take the habit, because they have no other way to live. Some men of genius and learning have at times appeared amongst them; yet in general they are a people, who do very little more in this world, than perform their religious duties, and eat, drink, and sleep.

The religious houses here have declined very much within the space of this latter century. I have been told, that the convent of Cordeliers at Dijon, which had in
it

it near thirty friars about thirty years ago, has at present but seven; and that many other religious have fallen away in the same proportion. The zeal which depopulated Europe, making so many men in the bloom of youth and health dedicate themselves to celibacy, has very much abated. I am informed that the monks here, are not regarded so much as they formerly were, nor so much domesticated in the houses of the citizens, nor by any means looked upon in the same light they were a century, or even forty years ago.

The French are of so volatile a temper, that they seem not well adapted to religious sadness; for which reason perhaps, monastic institutions have had less success among them than in Spain, where the people are solemn and austere, and yet romantic to excess. This pre-disposition, together with
the

the natural slothfulness of the Spaniards, made them embrace with ardour, an institution so agreeable to their nature, and they have carried it to excess; and probably will continue in their religious inclination, until their national character shall change, which is not soon to be expected. The phlegmatic disposition of the English seemed likewise to have been well adapted to a monastic life; but the turn for industry among the people, damped the spirit of austerity; which, notwithstanding, was once carried very far; and above all, the passion for liberty and independence, and the eternal broils and uproar of a contending people were not at all agreeable to the passive obedience, inactivity, and calm retirement of a cloister. But in Ireland we were much better adapted to it, being less volatile than the French, and less industrious than the English. Our
island

island teemed with monks, friars, nuns, and religious of all orders and denominations; and to such an excess was carried this zeal for a religious life, that the rest of Europe called our kingdom the Island of Saints. Congellius who built the monastery of *Beaunchoir* in Ulster, had above twenty thousand religious in different monasteries under his government. This monastery of *Beaunchoir* was the greatest in the universe; and in the year 565, contained above *three thousand monks*. The almost innumerable ruins of abbeys, friaries, and convents, to be seen in every part of the kingdom, shew to what a length this monastic fury was carried, which nobody could believe, if we had not the ruins at this day to convince us of it. It appears to me, that Ireland was then in a deplorable situation. A great part of the wealth of the state was possessed by the religious; while

while the numerous chieftains, or rather petty tyrants, were plundering, ravishing, murdering, and building convents, and the little commerce carried on was in the hands of the Danes, who possessed the principal seaports of the island; a possession easily acquired from the old Irish, who were never industrious, and only formed for a life of religion or war.

On the continent; when all Europe was immersed in an abyss of darkness and barbarity, the monks and friars alone possessed the little learning which remained, and all the books and arts of the ancients which escaped the devastations of the Goths and Turks, have been preserved in monasteries and convents. The religious being the only people who possessed any knowledge or learning, were looked up to with the greatest veneration by the rest of mankind;

kind; and some of these religious having ambition and pride like other men, found it their interest, and they perhaps thought it the interest also of the church, to keep the people in the grossest ignorance.— On the establishment of the Inquisition in France, in the reign of St. Lewis, by the counsel of Toulouse, it was strictly forbidden for any layman to have a bible in his house, and only permitted the psalms and breviary, provided they were in Latin. I have been informed by good authority, that there is a curious manuscript preserved in the archives of Dijon, which is an agreement between a baron, who could not write his name, and the religious of the church at Dijon, in which, under hand and seal they promised, that for a certain quantity of land which he bestowed upon the church, he should enter into Heaven, *les deux portes déployé, the two gates*

thrown open. And also another deed, by which a certain lord was to receive as many acres of land in the next world as he gave to the religious in this. Such was the ignorance of the laity in general in those times of darkness, that Charlemagne, the wisest and greatest man of his age, could neither read or write. All France at that time, as well as the rest of Europe, was a tissue of murders, ignorance, and superstition. The clergy were adored and feared, but they, like other men, were capable of ambition, and did almost as they pleased with the barbarous and superstitious laity. The princes and chiefs were taught, that by founding a convent or monastery, they became absolved from the most dreadful crimes and purchased eternal happiness. St Elou said one day to King Dagobert, "mon prince, donnez moi la terre de Solignac, enfin que j'en
fasse

faſſe une échelle par laquelle vous & moi nous méritons de monter au ciel." *My Prince, give me the land of Solignac, in fine, that I may make of it a ladder by which you and I may deſerve to mount into Heaven.—* This ladder was a great monaſtery, where they eſtabliſhed one hundred and fifty monks. By a counſel held at Troſté, in the dioceſe of Soiffons, in the reign of Charlemagne, even the miſerable ſoldiers and tradefmen were obliged to give the clergy the tenth part of what they gained by their labour: ſays the counſel, "Car l'induſtrie qui vous fait vivre appartient à Dieu: vous lui en devez donc la dixieme." *For the induſtry which makes you live, belongs to God: you owe him therefore the tenth part of it.* This was a ſtrange way of reaſoning; but it was quite ſatisfactory in that age. To ſuch a pitch of nonſenſe and extravagance were the minds

of the people worked up at that time, that there was nothing ever so ridiculous which they have not equalled. In the reign of Philip I. of France, Pope Urban II. held a counfel at Nîmes, where the following canon was refolved. “ Some foolish
“ persons, through too much zeal, pre-
“ tended that the monks, being dead to
“ the world to live for God, are unwor-
“ thy of facred functions, fuch as giving
“ penance, abfolution, and baptifm : but
“ they are miftaken. St. Be-
“ nedict has only forbidden the monks to
“ meddle with temporal affairs, which is
“ equally forbidden to canons. Both
“ the one and the other are angels, for
“ they announce the will of God : but
“ the angelic order is more elevated, for
“ they contemplate God nearer. Have
“ not the monks fix wings like the cheru-
“ bims, two figured by the sleeves, two
“ by

“ by the hood, and two by the rest of the
“ frock? Here are very plainly proved
“ six wings. Therefore we order that
“ those who rise against the monks for
“ this reason, be deprived of their priest-
“ hood, &c.”

One cannot look back into former times, without supposing that the demon of ignorance and nonsense bewitched all the inhabitants of Europe. The seven Electorships which absolutely compose the Germanic empire, were ordained by the Pope's bull in honour of the seven candlesticks of the Apocalypse. We may judge of the ignorance even of the clergy, when in the reign of Charlemagne, a law was made in France, by which the bishops were forbidden to confer the order of priesthood upon any one that could not say the Lord's Prayer.

Even in the cathedral church of Nôtre-Dame at Paris, they celebrated a ceremony which they called *The Festival of Fools*. Abbé Millot, in his "Elements of the History of France," says this festival of fools was a most scandalous farce, in which the ecclesiastics danced naked with marks upon their faces, and sang obscenities during the celebration of divine service.—Eudes de Sulli, archbishop of Paris, published an ordonance against this abuse; but it subsisted in despite of his prohibition, for more than two hundred years. They also formed another institution, called *The Festival of Asses*, which if possible was more extravagant than the festival of fools. In one part of the ceremony, a young girl mounted upon an ass, carrying in her arms a beautiful infant, went to place it in the sanctuary, while the mass began, and the choir concluded each prayer with a chorus

rus in imitation of the braying of asses!

I have seen the copy of an anathema fulminated at Rheims, in these words.—

“ Qu’ils soient maudits à la ville, maudits
“ à la campagne. Que leurs enfans, leurs
“ terres, troupeaux soient maudits avec
“ eux! Que leurs intestins se repandent
“ come eux de l’impie Arius! Que toutes
“ les maledictions prononces par Moyse
“ contre le prevaricateurs tombent sur
“ leur tête! Qu’ils soient accablés de
“ toutes les horreurs de la morte éternelle!
“ Qu’ aucun Chrétien ne les salue
“ en les rencontrant! Qu’ aucun prêtre ne
“ dise la Messe devant eux, ne les confesse,
“ et ne les donne communion, même à l’article
“ de la mort, s’ils ne vient à la recu-
“ pence! Qu’ ils n’aient d’autre sepulture
“ que celles des ânes: afin qu’ils

“ soient aux generations presentes & futures
“ un exemple d’opprobre & malediction !”

May they be cursed in the town, cursed in the country! May their children, their lands, their cattle be cursed along with them! May their intestines fall out like those of the impious Arius! May all the maledictions pronounced by Moses against the prevaricators fall upon their head! May they be overwhelmed with all the horrors of eternal death! May no christian salute them on meeting them! May no priest say mass before them, nor confess them, nor give them the communion, even at the point of death, if they do not come to make reparation! May they have no other burial place but that of asses; in fine, may they be to present and future generations an example of ignominy and malediction.

In the bull fulminated against the Emperor Lewis, in the year 1346, by Pope Clement

Clement VI. is the following excommunication: " May the wrath of God, of St. Peter, and St. Paul fall heavy upon him in this world, and in the world to come! May the earth gape and swallow him alive: may his memory be erased from among men: may he be tormented in the four elements, and may his children be butchered by his enemies, even before his face!

LETTER XLVI.

Dijon, September 12th.

THE vintage is to commence here in about a week. I intend to go and spend some days in the country, that I may get intimately acquainted with the methods used by this people to press and ferment their wines.

The inhabitants of this country appear much more sprightly, robust, and florid than the Parisians, which I think may be attributed to their excellent wines. I do not say, that I have seen in any of these places such a profusion of fine girls, as are distributed through almost every town in England and Ireland; yet, there are here
a variety.

a variety of the most captivating young ladies. They almost universally have the finest teeth, and most sprightly black eyes in the world, and possess an affability, gaiety, and delicate good-humour that would make a very savage be delighted with their presence. Some of them are absolutely bewitching, and have a certain something in their air and manner that is *tout-à-fait charmant*...

The dress of the young *paysannes* of Burgundy, and indeed of most other parts of France, is truly very neat, pretty, and becoming, and infinitely more so, than the dress worn by the women of our common people in England and Ireland.— Their caps are of a far more pretty fashion, and the jackets and petticoats frequently of scarlet, which they wear, appear very smart, and even coquettish. The dress of

our peasantry women appears awkward, and I may say, struttish, in comparison to the compact neatness of the French. The caps worn by our female peasants, with a border tied under the chin, are very unbecoming and even disfigure the countenance. These caps are also more or less expensive to the poor creatures, and are totally insufficient to defend them from the inclemency of the weather. The bonnets, chip-hats, &c. worn by some of them are also liable to similar inconvenience. The stays which many of them wear, are excessively unnatural, and even distort the human shape, on account of their stiffness, straight form and great length. The long bodied gowns worn by them, are also struttish and ill adapted to the human shape. Their mantles also are less commodious than almost any other external covering that could be invented. Now, I think,
that

that if a dress could be contrived for them in which convenience, use, economy, and neatness should be united, it would not be unworthy the attention of such men of fortune and consequence as have generosity enough to promote the happiness of their fellow creatures. It is a subject highly deserving of our consideration, for the laborious commonalty are the very basis and foundation of the state, and ought to be cherished by every one who wishes to promote the public welfare.

As the caps worn by our female peasants are unbecoming, expensive and useless, I think they should totally be abandoned. The women should wear their own hair combed down in ringlets on the shoulders, as worn by many of our young ladies at present, a manner the most simple, modest, beautiful, and conformable to nature.—

For

For covering on the head they should wear round hats with deep crowns, such as are worn in winter by several of our young ladies. These hats would in every respect be preferable to any other covering for the head. They would defend the complexion from the sun in summer and autumn, and shelter them from the cold and rain in winter. These hats likewise would appear very becoming, and may be either simply black, or grey edged with brown, or of any other fanciful colour; and may be further ornamented on holidays, with a broad ribbon or plume of feathers.— These hats may be of felt, yet were they of beaver, and exactly similar to those worn by the young ladies, they would not altogether come so expensive as the caps, ribbons, &c. worn at present.

Instead of stays, they should wear a strong short vest made of fustian doubled,

or

or of some such thing. Their vest should have no whale-bone in it, or at any rate, have very little. It should be laced on in the manner of a stays, but the lacing should be at the fore part, and not at the back, for this latter way would be very inconvenient.

Instead of the long-bodied gowns, they should wear a jacket and petticoat pretty much in the French manner. The jacket and petticoat may be either of stuff, cotton, cloth, or any other thing found most convenient. The jacket, if judged necessary, may, for ornament, be edged with ribbon or tape of a different colour. It is not necessary that the jacket and petticoat be always of the same colour, by which means this dress may often come cheaper than the gowns at present worn: for a poor girl may perhaps have sufficient
of

of one kind of cloth to make herself a jacket, and enough of another to make a petticoat, but not a sufficiency of either to make a gown. The petticoat should not be tied on with a string, for it would be too sharp, and its pressure be more or less detrimental to the constitution; but should be fastened by a band of above two inches in breadth, to be buckled at the back.— This band or upper edge of the petticoat, should come higher on the waist than at present customary; that it should not by pressing upon the hips, impede the circulation, or injure the nerves. The petticoat should be about five inches shorter than that at present in use, by which it would appear far neater and more becoming, and infinitely more convenient, especially as our island is subject to almost continual wet. For ornament, the petticoat may have a border, or it may be mitred.

mitred with stuff of a different colour, which would appear very shewy and pretty.

Inside this petticoat, they need only wear a very short petticoat of doubled flannel, or something in the nature of the things worn by the French women, and which they call *betises* or *droles*, but by no means with so much stuffing.

Stockings they may wear of any kind they please, but the usage of strong thick socks should be more general than it is, to preserve their feet from the cold and damp of so wet a climate. The water brash or water pang, is very common among our peasantry, and this disorder is frequently occasioned by having the feet for a length of time exposed to wet. On the continent, where rain is not so frequent

quent as in Ireland, and where the peasants protect their feet from wet and cold in winter by their thick socks, furs, and wooden shoes, the disorder is absolutely unknown.

High-heeled shoes would be extremely inconvenient to the laborious peasants, besides it is unnatural for women to augment their stature in so awkward and fanciful a manner. The shoes, such as are commonly worn by our peasants, fastened by a string instead of a buckle, are far more natural and convenient.

Their bosoms should not be covered by the fore part of the jacket, but as customary at present, may be screened with a neck-kerchief at will.

They

They should wear an apron, either red or blue, or any other colour, rather for use than ornament. It should be tied on round the waist with tape, and be pinned up to the breast as customary among the French, so as completely to cover the forepart of the body from the breast downwards. In the forepart of the apron, or of the petticoat, should be a pocket in a horizontal direction, and not situated at the side after the very awkward manner in which our women commonly wear their pockets.

The mantle or cloak, should be entirely abandoned, and in lieu thereof, should be substituted a great coat of coarse cloth, fitting close to the body, and with long sleeves buttoning close on the wrist, exactly such as are worn by many young ladies. These great coats, which need only
be

be used in winter and in rainy weather, would more effectually preserve their persons from the inclemency of the season, appear infinitely more neat and pretty, be in every respect more convenient, and come cheaper than the mantles which are at present commonly worn.

Were a dress similar to what I have described introduced among our peasantry, it would be productive of infinite benefit. And I am confident, that the hats, great coats, and socks, would be a means of preserving the health of many, and even save the lives of thousands.

There is a nobleman in the south of Ireland, who, at his own expence, has made excellent roads through places which were formerly impassable, has built bridges, and erected houses endowed with
reve-

revenues for the support of distressed gentlewomen, has erected public edifices, and even built a very neat town for his peasantry, has established manufactures, and made the whole country smile around him with industry and cultivation; a man who lives adored by the peasants, and looked up to as the father of his people. Such a character as this must be truly happy, for he must feel more pleasure in doing one generous action, than a miser can experience in his whole life of ill-nature and penury. And to such a character I would recommend the reformation of dress among the peasantry. The Irish appear to be naturally fond of shew and fashion in apparel; and were some gentlemen of consequence to bestow a few dresses neatly made after the above manner, upon their dependants and tenantry, the fashion would quickly become universal among
the

the peasants. These dresses should be bestowed upon the prettiest girls, in preference to any others; by which means the dress would inevitably succeed and be adopted by all.

LET.

LETTER XLVII.

Dijon, September 14th.

FRENCH compliments are proverbial in England and Ireland, yet the Irish in general have a kinder opinion than the English of the Gallic nation. And indeed the better sort of people in England are almost totally divested of the spirit which some years ago was apt to load the French with the most pitiful scurrility. Yet I am very far from thinking, that the plain and honest character of an Englishman, is not preferable to a glittering superficies of politeness.

I have heard a gentleman of wit apply the following lines of Young's Night Thoughts to the French nation in particular.

A region

A region of outfides ! a land of shadows !

A fruitful field of flow'ry promises !

For my part, I shall not be so severe, at least on the inhabitants of Burgundy, for their wine is so good, the people so polite, and sociable, and the ladies altogether so agreeable, that they would force me to be happy, even in despite of my endeavours to the contrary.

Mr. Grosley, a French gentleman, who wrote some remarks on the people of England, mentioned, that one day as he passed through the streets of London, he saw a lamp-lighter let fall some of his oil upon a passenger, who without appearing incensed, calmly received the excuses of the lamp-lighter, and walked on without ceremony.

Mr.

Mr. Grosley thought his conduct very remarkable, and from this and other incidents concluded, that the English were naturally more calm and reasonable than the French. Even a more trifling incident at Paris would set fire to the spirit of a *petit-mâitre*, and make them explode like gun-powder. The other would retort with equal acrimony, when in an instant all would be hurry, bustle, and agitation, and yet,

*Hi motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta,
Pulveris exigui jacta compressa quiescent.*

I have been to see an edifice on the ramparts of Dijon, built not a long time ago by a gentleman of considerable fortune. It consists chiefly of several pavilions of most exquisite architecture, with a little flower-garden upon the top of each. The stairs leading to the top of each pavilion,

are managed in a most singular manner, and appear to hang self-balanced in the air. Opposite to the pavilions was a bastion, which has been converted into a little pleasure garden, adorned in a very splendid stile. In this garden is a structure, which appears to have formerly been of the Corinthian order. It is formed of oak laths in fret-work, and painted green. Though the majesty of Corinthian architecture might not have been so well adapted to a work of the kind, yet it was executed with much taste, and must have appeared uncommonly beautiful and grand. And yet the possessor thought he should improve it, by metamorphosing this beautiful pavilion into a Chinese pagod. His architects commenced by topping off the leaves and volutes from the Corinthian pillars, hanging wooden bells in their places, in the most burlesque manner that
can

can be imagined. And the Corinthian shafts crowned with this futile ornament, appear as incongruous and absurd, as would Cato of Utica with a modern military laced hat upon his head. The architects likewise covered the roof, &c. with wooden alligators, winged serpents, hobgoblins, and newly invented animals, grinning at one another in the most hideous and distorted manner. Thus, one half of the pavilion is in the Corinthian taste, and the rest a menagery of monsters,

*Cujus, velut ægri somnia, vanæ
Fingentur species; ut nec pes, nec caput uni
Reddatur formæ.*

It is only one man out of ten thousand of all these that lavish their money in buildings and improvements, who knows how to do it with any taste or elegance.

LETTER XLVIII

Burgundy, September 15th.

I AM now in the country, within two or three miles of Dijon, at a village where they make a considerable quantity of wine. Our village is situated among the vineyards, at the foot of the chain of hills, on which are produced some of the best wines in the province. Before us, extends an immense plain, and immediately behind us, are the mountains. The vineyards situated on the south-east side of the hills, cannot be said to be either on the declivity of the hills, nor upon the plain: but at that part where an angle is formed by the junction of the mountains and the plain, a kind of focus, in which are concentrated

all

all the rays of the sun, reflected by the hills above, and the extended plain below. The vine country may be about one thousand yards in breadth, and extends all along the bottom of the hills, as I am informed, for near a hundred miles. Long and repeated experience has proved, that the vines produced either more upon the hills, or farther out upon the plain, are always of an inferior quality.

There are not any ditches or fences inclosing the vineyards of each individual, wherefore the whole appears one immense garden. Nothing in the world can appear more beautiful, than such a great extent of land covered with vineyards. The tops of the vines form with one another an unequal surface of the most clear and vivid green, under which hang the innumerable clusters of luxuriant grapes, almost

weighing to the ground the parent vine, and seeming to melt with ripeness. Never did I see any thing so charming in my life. It made my heart thrill with gratitude, to that Being of Beings we cannot comprehend, who pities us, and bids the earth produce every thing for our pleasure and delight.

It is very remarkable what variety is caused in this plant by the smallest change of soil or situation. On one side of a hill the grapes may be seen in their full lustre, yet on the other side of the same hill appear green and sour. A few yards often cause a prodigious alteration in the flavour and excellence of the fruit. Besides the variety caused by the differing of soil and climate, the wine likewise is good or bad according to the favourableness of the season; the time of the year in which the
grapes

grapes are pressed, the age of the plant, and lastly, the age of the wine. It often happens, that a vineyard which this year produces a rich and high flavoured wine, may the next year produce a wine but little superior to verjuice.

The soil all along the hills, or that part called *le Côte*, is a dry, light, sandy, stoney, and reddish earth. This kind of soil would, in Ireland, be looked upon as ungrateful and unworthy of cultivation: yet it is only in such spots in this country, that the vines are found to flourish. I judge the soil of the Côte, as well as that of Burgundy in general, to be an argillaceous earth, or at any rate, a marle composed of calcareous and argillaceous earths: because all the rivulets in the country appear uncommonly opaque and muddy for several days after rain. The red colour

of earth is very frequently occasioned by iron, and therefore, it is probable, that the soil of the Côte is also covered by a greater or less quantity of iron in a mineral, or calcined state, or perhaps united to fixed air. Yet it should not be supposed that the vine is nourished by the argillaceous earth, or by any mineral composition; for it has been proved to demonstration, that vegetables absorb nothing from the earth, but water, and the reason why certain soils are more generous to certain kinds of vegetables than to others, may be, that in such soils the water, filtered through the interstices of the earth, becomes applied to the absorbent pores of the plant, in quantity, manner, and degree of fluidity or union with the matter of light or heat, most agreeable to the nature of such certain vegetables. It is probable that the land of this
province

province is more elevated in situation than any other of the kingdom, because the principal rivers of France take their rise in Burgundy, and thence flow down through the other provinces to the sea.

In some parts on the sides of the rugged hills, I have seen the vines loaded with the most exquisite and delicious fruit, and yet growing among small flags or stones of a whitish or reddish colour. As such places cannot be ploughed or dug, the vine-dressers content themselves with making little holes here and there in any sand or earth at all observable among the stones, in which to plant the vines; and it is generally experienced, that the vines come to perfection in such places, but would quickly be in a manner choaked up in a deep and heavy soil.

I have heard that an English nobleman of the first distinction, some years ago took it into his head, to bring a quantity of the best vine plants from Burgundy, and also some of the peasants who had been from their infancy accustomed to their cultivation, to rear a vineyard in the south of England. He took every precaution, and he absolutely made a few hogsheads of wine; but it was a wine which contained a great deal of what the French call *verdure*, and the grapes in general did not sufficiently ripen. The Burgundians said, that if he wished to produce as good wine in England as that produced in their province, he should bring to England, not only the vines, but also the soil and sun. Yet I think, that this should not intimidate us from further attempts, for it is a hundred to one that the Duke planted his vines in a soil not adapted to them; for
it

it has been only by repeated experiments that they have been able to discover the happy spot. The vine was anciently cultivated in Wales, and even in the north of England. It is probable that it was also known in Ireland several centuries ago. MUIN, which signifies a vine, was the name given to the letter M, the eleventh letter of the old Irish alphabet, or rather *beith-luis-nion*: the name of each letter of which signifies a tree or shrub of the most known and common kinds, as *beith*, a birch tree; *scarn*, an alder, &c. Now, I do not think it probable that the ancient Irish would have given the term *muin*, to express the letter M, among the names of the most known kinds of trees, unless the vine was commonly known in the island.

I am convinced, that we could cultivate the vine with some success in the south of Ireland,

Ireland, if not to make wine, at least to conserve the fruit. We have many spots where I think it would flourish, particularly among the hills in certain parts of the county of Cork, and in some places among the hills on the banks of the river Suir. These hills are in general composed of lime-stones, which retain the heat all night, and absorb the moisture, properties which would be particularly agreeable to the vines. Besides, the strata of the lime stone in these hills do not lie horizontally, but shoot up almost in a perpendicular direction, forming an unequal surface, and producing here and there little spots of land, at least a degree more warm than the extended plains of the county of Limerick. At any rate, we should seldom be in danger of losing our vines by the continuance of snow upon the ground, as is frequently the case upon the continent.

LET.

LETTER XLIX.

Burgundy, September 19th.

YESTERDAY the échevin or sheriff came into our village, to publish in form the *ban de vendange*; that is, permission to commence the vintage, under pain of confiscation to such as should begin before the time appointed.

I hear the people complain of this ban de vendange, as a most absurd and tyrannical institution, by which they are not permitted to press their grapes before a certain time, and expressly restrained from vintaging on the day on which the lord of the manor pleases to vintage for himself, on purpose that the miserable

ble peasants having no employment may be necessitated to work for that day in his vineyards. This is absolute vassalage. How would the yeomen of England rise in tumultuous uproar, and overturn the whole constitution, sooner than be obliged under pain of confiscation, not to harvest before a certain day, to be prescribed to them by the arbitrary mandate of a magistrate, perhaps totally unacquainted with the affairs of husbandry!

The inhabitants of the village complain, that the ban de vendange is published too soon for the present season; for the grapes do not appear sufficiently ripe, and therefore it is supposed the wine will be too green. At the next village they do not expect their ban de vendange for near a fortnight; although
their

their grapes appear to be as ripe as ours. But the French only say, *mais, que voulez vous : c'est la loi!*

John James Rousseau thought that the civil power, so far from interfering and pretending to direct the business of husbandmen, should not even attempt to encourage agriculture by premiums; and even that cultivation cannot long flourish in England, because incited by premiums. I coincide with Rousseau, that the civil power ought not to interfere with husbandry by any institutions similar to the French *ban de vendange*, and their ancient *ban de moisson*. Yet I cannot suppose, that premiums can be productive of any thing but a greater emulation of industry; and every man in Ireland knows, that the rapid progress made by cultivation in our island within
a few

a few years, has been occasioned chiefly, by the encouragements afforded by our admirable Society.

The ban de vendange was made, on purpose to favour the interest of the possessors of vine-yards, in preference to the miserable peasants; and the interest of the lord of the manor, in preference to his tenants: for as the vintage is frequently over in one village, before they are permitted to commence in the next; the poor peasants go in crouds to the village where only they can hope for employment; and the landlords have it in their power, to prescribe almost what terms they please; and seldom allow them with a miserable diet, more than six sols, or six French halfpence, each day; and oblige them to work from four or five o'clock in the morning, until the setting of the sun.

LET-

LETTER LI.

Burgundy, September 23d.

OUR vintage is to commence on tomorrow, and every thing seems to promise a happy and successful harvest. For the weather is uncommonly warm, and the grapes are in abundance, and have ripened beyond expectation.

Our village is already crowded with men, women, and children, who come to vintage at this place, from the districts where no wine is made. They arrive in tribes together, making a most remarkable clatter with their wooden shoes. These wooden shoes, or as they call them

sabots,

sabots, are pieces of holly or other hard kinds of wood, shaped into a form nearly oval, with holes scooped in them, to receive the feet. I wonder much, that our peasants should be so frequently ridiculed on the stage for wearing brogues, or rather shoes without buckles, which are infinitely preferable to wooden shoes. Yet a kind of *sabots*, or shoes in part composed of wood, are still worn in certain parts of the British island.

The *vendangeurs* or peasants for the vintage, have arrived in our village, to the number of two thousand or more. Some brown bread, with the grapes which they pull as they pass along through the vineyards, appear to be the only nourishment they take. Those who have come here two or three days ago, without getting any employment, must be almost

almost half starved at the present time; and yet they appear to be quite happy and full of mirth and gaiety. In the village, and in the vineyards all round, I hear nothing but the warbling of clarinets, pipes, and songs in chorus. The peasants are distributed in parties through the streets of the village, and continue dancing the whole day, with a vivacity and content, that in other countries are not always the result of luxury and wealth.

Last night after supper, I took a walk with our family through the village. It was one of those fine nights, when the heavens are spangled with millions of twinkling stars, and the calm moon diffuses a light more pleasing to the eyes, all day fatigued by the heat and splendor of the sun. I beheld the poor peasants

fants sleeping on all sides in the streets. They lay together, by hundreds on the earth and hard stones, without any other covering than the cloaths they wore. The church yard of the village served as a bed to multitudes, who lay every where among the stones and graves; while a great number of women and children were crowded pell-mell into the porch of the church. I was informed that the reason why they preferred lying in the village rather than among the vines, was because they dreaded the wolves, which sometimes come down about the village from the mountains. On proceeding somewhat farther, I could scarce believe my ears, when I heard the same music, and singing that I had heard all day, still continued through the night. The young peasants preferred dancing and singing, to a sorrowful bed upon the earth;

earth; and in whatever spots the moon shone bright, formed companies to dance, dancing as if they were dancing mad, as if they were bitten by the tarantula, as if they danced through desperation!

Their dances were a kind of cotillons; in some places to the music of clarinets, or a kind of bagpipe; and where they had no instruments, they danced to the song of a number of girls, who continually were relieved by others. At the conclusion of each cotillon, each peasant generally embraced the cheeks of his partner, who sometimes to shew her agility gave a spring, but if she happened to make a faux-pas, which was often unavoidable from the inequality of the ground, it was received with great mirth, and a thousand gaieties in their own way. I never had before an idea, that
people

people could be so chearful and yet so poor. Are not these poor creatures more really happy, than many luxuriant inhabitants of the British empire, who though wallowing in riches, are devoured by gloomy fits of the spleen, and that disorder which the French call *la maladie Anglaise*, which make them discontented with themselves and the whole world, and often in all the horrors of pining discontent and melancholy, embrue their hands in their own blood!

Such a number of peasants, at a vintage, dancing all night together, as I am informed, occasion a great many amours; particularly as the French women are so very gallantly inclined. The French women are fruitful, and multiply their species very fast, at least much more so than the English; which appears

pears somewhat surprizing; for the Englishmen are generally stronger bodied than the French, more florid, robust, and better nourished, and therefore one would think, should generate their offspring with more success: yet it is far from being the case. In the south of Ireland, the huts of our peasants I may say, swarm with children, and yet our common people live chiefly on vegetables and milk; the French peasants also subsist for the most part on a vegetable diet; from which considerations I think it probable, that animal food, though affording the richest nourishment, is not so conducive to propagation as a farinaceous or leguminous diet. I have heard it said, that man was intended by nature to live chiefly upon a vegetable food: because his teeth resemble the teeth of frugivorous animals, and are not like the

the sharp fangs with which carnivorous quadrupeds lacerate their prey. Yet this does not appear to me a convincing argument, because man is armed with hands by which to divide his food into morsels proper for mastication, and consequently fangs would be totally useless.

LET-

LETTER LI.

Burgundy, December 27th.

I HAVE been for the greater part of this day in the vineyards. I walked out with our ladies, and taking a little basket and scissars, amused myself at cutting the grapes. I learned to distinguish the high flavoured *muscadine*, the delicate *chasselas*, and all the varieties of this delicious fruit.

I took pleasure in listening to the songs of the girls who cut the grapes, of *les vendangeuses*, many of whom had absolutely most agreeable voices. They kept together in one large group as they proceeded on their work through the

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vineyards,

vineyards, and joining in an universal chorus, made the hills re-echo with their chearful strains. They sang many of their favourite airs with a kind of rapture, and a rural simplicity, which to me seemed more charming than the concert-spirituel at Paris. They sang the tale of Gabrielle de Vergy: and I was quite enraptured, on hearing them sing the old rustic French song so much praised in the *Misanthrope* of Molière: a song, in which the unadorned and simple sentiments of nature and love, appear infinitely superior to the trifling conceits of our modern compositions. Some of the rural songs they sang, made me recollect the speech of the Duke in Shakespeare's twelfth night.

———— The song we had last night ———

Mark it, Cefario, it is true and plain:

The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,

And

And the free maids that weave their thread with
bones

Do chant it. It is silly sooth,

And dallies with the innocence of love

Like the old age.

Each person in the vineyards carries
in one hand a little basket, and in the
other a pair of scissars, and on filling
the little basket empties it into one of
a much larger size, called a benaton.
Nothing can appear more rich and luxu-
riant, than a number of these benatons
brimful of grapes. From these baskets
the fruit is poured into large oval tubs,
to be carried on waggons to the presses
in the Village.

All the purple grapes, with a few
clusters of white mixed through them,
on arriving at the press, are thrown pell-
mell into *cuvées*, or large tubs, similar to

those which are used in the brewing of beer. At the bottom of each cuve is a cock, to let flow out the rich and sweet juice, distilling from the grapes, by the simple pressure of the clusters upon one another. This juice is called *la mère goutte*, the mother drop, which converts itself into the most generous wine, and is infinitely superior to that forced out by violent pressure.

The grapes being thus tumbled into the cuves, after some time begin to ferment and heat, until at length they liquify, boil, and foam. During this first fermentation the juice extracts a red colour from the skins of the grapes, and the wine becomes more or less deep in colour, according as it is more or less cued.

When

When the grapes begin to ferment, some of the vintagers strip themselves naked and plunge into the cuves, sometimes up to their necks, and stir, paddle and mix the juice and grapes with their arms and legs to forward the fermentation. It gave me a disgust to red wine, to see these filthy peasants naked in the cuves: especially when I was assured, that they often remain in them for five or six hours together, and are very seldom so ceremonious as to come out on any particular occasion. Yet this is the Burgundy wine so much admired for its flavour; and sometimes sipped by the ruby lips of delicate young ladies!

When the grapes have sufficiently fermented in the cuves, for four, six, or eight days, according to the season, they are put upon the press, and the juice is

K 3 forced.

forced out by violent pressure, and the weight of great beams urged down by huge wooden screws. The juice which runs off at the beginning of the pressing, is carefully preserved, and not mixed with that which runs off next, much less with that forced out by the second pressure, being of a much superior quality.

As to the white grapes, they are never caved at all ; but are thrown upon the press immediately on their arrival from the vineyard. Because, if the white grapes were suffered to undergo a fermentation in the cuves, the juice would extract a disagreeable yellowish tinct from the skins, and an astringent principle which would taste unpleasant in the wine.

I am informed, that the grey wine of Champaign so much esteemed, is not the juice

juice of a white, but of a purple grape. For the fruit is never put to ferment in cûves like that of Burgundy; but immediately on arriving from the vineyards, is placed upon the press, and the juice squeezed out with the greatest gentleness and caution. Thus the grapes not being fermented in the cûves, nor violently pressed, the juice cannot extract the red colour from the skins, and flows quite limpid from the press.

In Burgundy, if the day be not very warm they dare not venture to cut the grapes; but in Champaign they vintage at the dawn of day, before the dews and fogs are dissipated: for if the grapes were cut during the heat of the day, they would easily ferment and the wine become coloured.

The wine of Champaign not having undergone any fermentation in the cuves, on being poured out into the glafs, liberates a great quantity of an elastic fluid, which would not have been retained, or rather perhaps generated, had the wine been as much fermented as the red wines of Burgundy. This elastic fluid is what has been called fixed air by Dr. Black, cretaceous acid by some of the French chymists, and in fine *carbonic acid*. According to the oxygenious theory of the French chymists it is an acid, composed of the carbonic matter of the vegetable substances in fermentation, united to oxygengas or vital air. This is the destructive gas produced by the combustion of charcoal. It is also at times the gas which suffocates the colliers in the coal-pits: The gas produced by the respiration of animals: The
gas

gas which can be liberated from chalk, from the substances commonly called sal sodæ, and salt of tartar, by the action of lemon juice. It also is disengaged from beer and cyder in fermentation as well as from wine. Whenever the vintage is very abundant in this province, and that the cellars are crowded with an unusually great number of barrels of new wine in fermentation, the quantity of this elastic fluid which disengages, is often productive of very dreadful consequences. Being specifically heavier than the atmospherical air, it remains stagnant in the cellars; and a candle plunged into it, is as effectually extinguished, as if it had been dipped into cold water. And any animal who descends into a cellar completely filled with this deleterious fluid, inevitably dies. Even if a person breathes close to the bung-hole

of a cask of new wine in fermentation, he is almost instantly struck dead. Yet I by no means think, there is any poisonous or corrosive property in this aeriform acid, capable of destroying life; but suppose, that an animal perishes, on being dipped into an atmosphere of this fluid, merely for want of vital air.

LET.

LETTER LII.

Burgundy, October 5th.

A VINE, whether it comes from a young twig, a layer, a plant, or a graft, does not attain its age of perfect maturity in less than five years; after which period, the older it be, the better is the fruit in quality, but the less in quantity.

It is remarkable that the vineyards which produce the best wines, yield them in a very small quantity, whereas the other vineyards produce the inferior sorts of wine in great abundance, as if Heaven envied us this delicious liquor. The vineyards which produce the best wines of the province, are truly inestimable. Among
the

the first, are counted the vines of St. George, and of Romanée, near Nuits. The vineyards of Romanée belong to the prince of Condé, the produce of which he reserves for his own family, and to bestow as presents on different princes; so that even in Burgundy, it is with the greatest difficulty one can purchase a bottle. The wine of St. George is by some persons esteemed equal to that of Romanée; it is sold at the inns on the spot for about three livres a bottle. These wines exhale a most delicate perfume, which the French call *le bouquet*, and which bears some distant resemblance to that of raspberries.— They have nothing of the purple colour of inferior Burgundy wines, but much incline to the colour of vermillion: and after deglutition leave a most delicious flavour on the palate. These invaluable wines are called by the inhabitants of
Burgundy

Burgundy *le vin des Dieux, the wines of the Gods.*

We never get any of the very best Burgundy wines in Ireland, for they are bought up by the French nobility and the princes of the blood. Neither do we ever get any of the most inferior wines, for they would not bear the passage. Thus, we neither get either the best or the worst of the Burgundian wines, but the middling sorts only.

We very seldom import any white Burgundy into Ireland. I have enquired the reason of it, and am told, that in general it is not capable of bearing the passage, or of retaining its body for any length of time. However, the white wine of Mâcon is a light and agreeable wine, and the Burgundians universally drink it at breakfast.

L.E.T.

LETTER LIII.

Burgundy, October 7th.

I HAVE become pretty well accustomed to the French way of living. Though they have abundance of the most excellent wines they never intoxicate themselves, but with a most happy conviviality, enjoy as much only as gives birth to good humour and gaiety, without, in a manner drowning their senses, and rendering themselves incapable of any other sensation of pleasure. I am inclined to think, that the gaiety of the French is occasioned principally by the light and delicious wines of Champaign and Burgundy. These wines diffuse the most happy mirth and gaiety through a whole company, and give

give a lively flow of ideas to the imagination, of a far more pleasing, airy, and volatile kind, than are ever the effect of red port, or any other stronger bodied, but less delicate wines.

There are many persons in Ireland who cannot believe that the French eat frogs, but I assure you it is a fact that they do. There are persons who make it their business to catch them; and they are sold by the hundred in the markets. In a book describing the diversions used in France, such as angling, shooting, catching larks by looking-glasses, &c. I have seen *la pêche de grenouilles*, or the frog-fishing, particularly mentioned. To catch the frogs, the fishermen put one of them into a glass vessel which he dips into a brook. On which the creature, finding itself in so strange a situation, confined in the midst
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of water in a transparant machine, or I may say invifible prifon, begins to croke moft melodioufly, and by his croking, makes great multitudes of other frogs come to him on every fide, as if to refcue their companion: when the frog-fifher valiantly feizes on his prey. As frogs are accounted fifh in France, the people are permitted to eat them upon Fridays. And all declare, that a fricaffee of frogs *à la fauce blanche*, is quite delicious; and frogs are often feen on the very genteleft tables in the kingdom. The hind quarters of the frogs are the only parts that are eaten or ferved at table. A French perfon faid to me, that he did not think we cenfured them with juftice for eating frogs, while we continued to eat fhrimps and cockles, which appeared to him as animals much more contemptibly fmall, and not fo delicious as frogs.

Snails

Snails are likewise eaten fricassied, by the inhabitants of France. But the French are not the only people who have served snails on their tables; for the ancient Romans frequently eat them, and even looked upon them as a very great delicacy. Sallust, the historian, mentions in his account of the Jugurthine war, that at the siege of Capsa, "Fortè quidam ligus, " ex cohortibus auxiliariis, miles gregarius, castris aequatum egressus, haud " procul ab latere castelli; quod adversum præliantibus erat, animadvertit inter saxa repentes Cochleas, quarum cum " unam; atque alteram, dein plures peterit; studio legundi paulatim prope " ad summum montis egressus est."

We perceive by the letters of Pliny the younger, that snails were served at the tables of the first men of Rome. In one
of

of his letters, he invited his friend to supper, which he told him was to consist of two snails. The Romans took care to rear their snails with the greatest attention, and so improve the breed, and fatten them so much, as to have snails weighing each from a pound to a pound and a half or more. Snails seem to abound in an oleaginous slime, and a luscious fat like that of cod and eels, and when so very large as those mentioned by Pliny, must have been very nutritious. Yet there is something horrid in the thought of eating either frogs or snails, and I hope, for the honour of my country, that no Irishman will ever contaminate his body, by even tasting such abomination.

LET-

LETTER LIV.

Burgundy, October 10th.

WE have in our village about a dozen genteel *bourgeoise* families, who have come here on account of the vintage, and we spend our time in the most agreeable society. Each person seems to think it his duty to be particularly sprightly and gay during the vintage, and indeed with reason, for it is then the grateful earth rewards us for the pains of cultivation, and all the country smiles with rich clusters of the ripened grape, and inspires all mankind with joy and happiness. There are three most beautiful and bewitching young ladies in our family, and we every evening make the most agreeable parties with the

the other young folk in the village, and dancing seems to be all the business of our lives. It is impossible to express the gaiety, politeness, hospitality, and convivial happiness of the people. As our village is placed in a rural situation, I the other day went into the vineyards, and climbing up into an old cherry tree, seated myself as well as I could, and drew in colours a picture of the village, with *the decent church* and steeple at the center, the green vineyards all around, and the mountain immediately behind the village, with vines planted in many places among the shelving rocks and on the brink of precipices. This little picture I gave on my return to one of our young ladies, who with some eagerness went to shew it to her acquaintance, and in less than two hours, I found it had been circulated from one lady to another through almost the whole

whole village. Each lady was curious to distinguish her own house in the picture, and as there were female figures represented in some of the windows, each lady fancied she discovered some likeness of herself—in short, I became a favourite, and am grown so pleased, and so vain on account of it, that I do not envy Michael Angelo himself. From this I can judge of the nature of the French, for a very trifle, a curious nothing sometimes draws their applause and admiration.—
O! c'est beau! c'est superbe! And indeed among all mankind, even among the most grave and rational, a pleasing incident, a repartee, a curious talent, or a less significant affair, frequently captivates sooner than more solid worth and total perfection.

Yesterday carrying with me a small telescope, I ascended the mountains, accom-

accompanied by a gentleman of the robe, and his brother an officer, both men of exquisite politeness, and well informed on most literary subjects. My intention was to take a view of the country from an elevated situation, and examine the vestiges of an ancient Roman camp on the summit of the highest hill, called Mont Afrique. As I ascended, instead of a country covered with vines, I passed through a dreary desert. Among the inhospitable hills, I was surprized to find a village, called Courcelles, the inhabitants of which appeared rude and miserable, partaking of the wretchedness of the situation. At this village my friends went with me to the house of Monsieur *le Curé*, with whom they were acquainted. This gentleman lived here like a philosopher amidst the rude mountains, and his still-ruder flock. He was
kind

kind enough to accompany us to the summit of the mountain, and give us every information in his power. Leaving our horses at Courcelles, we clambered through rugged and winding paths for about three miles, when at length we found ourselves on the summit of Mont Afrique. I placed myself upon the stump of an old tree, and enjoyed a most glorious prospect of the provinces of Burgundy and French-contée. On the left hand lay the city of Dijon, and to the right extended the long chain of hills, at the foot of which are produced the good wines, being a continuation of the mountain on which I stood. The vineyards situated close to one another at the bottom of the Côte, being only of a certain breadth, and winding along with the hills, appeared like a river of the most beautiful green colour meandering

dring along the sides of the mountains. All along the vine country, the numberless white and shining villages added a sprightliness and brilliancy to the view, and rendered the fine green of the vineyards more resplendent.

The vast plain which extended before me, did not display the rich verdure of the county Tipperary or Limerick, but the dark brown of fruitful industry and cultivation: but not now appearing so beautiful to the eye, the yellow harvest being carried off the plains. The country did not any where appear intersected with fences, ditches, or stone walls, but beautifully variegated with woods and forests, with innumerable country seats, villages and towns; and the branching veins of navigable rivers shining like looking-glasses, and seeming to flow on purpose,

pose, to nourish the numerous towns which adorned the banks.

Far off lay the mountains of Switzerland, forming a most awful and tremendous amphitheatre. When first I turned my glass upon them, if I may so express myself; and brought their terrors closer to my eye, I started with affright! My friend the curate perceiving my amazement, said to me, *Ab! Monsieur l'Anglais, vous voyez là de belles horreurs!* And in fact they were so. They did not present to my view the smooth surface of our Irish mountains, blue, and softly swelling, with their snowy summits fading on the sight; but abrupt precipices, dark caverns, and rugged chasms, formed by enormous rocks in the wildest chaos piled atop of one another. Perhaps on approaching, and

having them continually in view, they would not appear so dreadful as at first; but yet even at so great a distance, I could not behold them through a glass without terror; and even was pleased in thinking that I was distant from them. Mont Blanc, so celebrated by Rousseau, shewed his snowy summit far eminent above the clouds.

All along the bottom of the mountains, ran, I may say, a chain of towns and villages, bristling with spires and steeples; and in some places appeared cities, built high among the rocks like the nests of birds.

Mont Afrique the highest of all the mountains in Burgundy, was the best situation possible, to fix an encampment in the heart of an enemy's country,
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particularly among such a people as were the ancient barbarians of the place. This hill commands a prospect of a very extensive tract of country; so that no commotion or attempt could be made, without being perceived by the garrison. Besides, the mountain being so difficult on every side of access, rendered a surprize impossible.

The summit of the mountain is much in the form of a star; on account of the promontories which jet out from it on every side, and form a terrible natural fortification. It is somewhat depressed at the center. At present the greater part of it is overgrown with trees and shrubs.

The ditch and rampart of Cæsar's camp appear still to be as entire as ever. The line of intrenchment is much in the form

of a horse-shoe; one part of the camp being defended by a precipice and deep glen, which rendered it absolutely inaccessible on that side, and therefore a ditch unnecessary.

Returning from Mont Afrique, my companions pointed out to me among the hills, the ruins of an old Gothic castle, said to have been the residence of Gabrielle de Vergy. The lamentation of Gabrielle de Vergy has long been the darling of the peasantry in this part of the province, as Chevy chase, Robin Hood, and the Babes in the Wood have been in England.

Gabrielle de Vergy lived in the reign of Philip II. of France, the age of romance and chivalry. She was the most beautiful woman of her time, and was

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as admirable in disposition as she was lovely in person,

————— ‘ adorned
‘ With what all earth or Heaven could bestow
‘ To make her amiable’ —————

Raoul de Coucy, a most gallant and accomplished knight, and the lovely *Gabrielle*, from a sympathy of soul, fell deeply in love with one another. The *Seigneur Fayel*, one of the fierce and haughty barons not uncommon in that age, beheld the fair *Gabrielle*, and was smitten with her charms. In short, he passionately loved, and offered her his hand in marriage. But *Gabrielle de Vergy* having centered all her affections in *Raoul de Coucy*, declined his offer, and even persuaded her parents to refuse an alliance with him, a lord of far greater fortune and consequence than they. The impe-

tuous temper of Fayel could not brook a refusal: he loved her to distraction, and the thought of a successful rival inspired him with rage and fury; and he resolved, should he not succeed by gentler methods, to possess by open violence and force the lovely object of his desires. He knew his authority with king Philip; and that there was scarce a favour he could ask, his sovereign would refuse: For Fayel, though tyrannical and fierce, was a valiant soldier; and Philip had found him to be brave and loyal. In short, the sovereign authority interposed; and at the solicitations of Fayel, the parents of Gabrielle de Vergy were forced, to surrender up their lovely daughter, to be the spouse of a man she dreaded and abhorred. Her esteem for Raoul de Coucy, her plighted faith, and her recollection of the many tender assurances of

inviola.

inviolable love which they had mutually given, made her incapable of a second passion, and she thought it criminal and base to have any love for another. Reluctant and drowned in tears, she was forced to undergo the ceremony of marriage, and was then carried off by Fayel to his castle, where strongly fortified, he confided in his strength, and defied the neighbouring lords.

The lovely Gabrielle almost mad in love with de Coucy, could feel no tender affection for Fayel, and never beheld him without terror and grief. Her lord finding her ever sad and melancholy, and averse to his embraces, began to be jealous and severe. And yet he loved her almost to madness, but thinking that her heart still burned for another, and that he could have no place in her affections, he grew

still more fierce and cruel, and often wreaked his anger on his vassals. For ever dark and gloomy he spent his time reserved within his castle walls, and refused all commerce with the surrounding barons. The passions of Fayel were in all things ungovernable and fierce; and jealousy, often the attendant on the most violent love, now harrowed up his soul. And yet, the most virtuous, as well as the most beautiful of women, the lovely Gabrielle, was conscious of all the duties of a wife, of her honour, and the honour of her lord; but to love him, she found impossible, and to forget de Coucy, was what nothing but a miracle could force her to. The jealousy of Fayel, as an ardent fire is but augmented by showers of rain, was fed and nourished by the tears of his unhappy wife, until violence of passion almost deprived him of his reason. He kept

kept the fair Gabrielle confined to an apartment in the castle, and fancied every stranger he saw, was a rival who came to steal a private meeting with his wife.— Distracted by ungovernable jealousy and love, he spent his nights in restless agitation, and kept the draw-bridge of his castle almost continually hauled up, and his vassals in arms on the castle walls.— The cruelty of Fayel only served to make him appear more dreadful to his unhappy wife, and she almost melted away, devoured by sorrow and despair.

Raoul de Coucy had now heard, that Gabrielle de Vergy had given her hand in marriage to a lord of the greatest consequence and fortune. Almost frantic at the thought, he immediately took horse, and journed night and day, until he arrived at the castle of Fayel; where, to

his infinite sorrow and astonishment, he was informed, that she absolutely had become the wife of Fayel. Wild and furious, he almost knew not what he said or did: at length he went and demanded admittance at the castle, desiring the wife of Fayel to be informed, that it was Raoul de Coucy who wished to see her. Within his heart, all was despair and horror, and in the first access of his rage, he had resolved, to upbraid her with her baseness and cruelty, lay violent hands upon himself, and expire in her presence. He was soon informed, that the wife of Fayel was not to be seen by Raoul de Coucy, nor should he ever see her more. This news completed his distress, and he defied even fate to make him more wretched than he was. He began to curse himself and all mankind in the bitterness of his despair. Life he esteemed as the greatest

greatest curse, and the whole world appeared to him as one extended grave.— Resolving not to live, quite savage in his intentions, he joined the Crusado, and marched against the Saracens to the siege of Acre. In the first encounter with the Turks, he spurred forward before the other knights, and threw himself into the midst of the enemy; where fighting in despair, and seeking death on every side, he performed prodigies of valour. With the evening sun the Turks retreated from the field, and Raoul de Courcy was found by his squire, as yet alive, and exhausted by fatigue and loss of blood. His faithful squire was almost petrified with grief, on beholding the gallant de Courcy ready to expire. De Courcy knew his squire, and while the cold sweats and blood trickled down his pale body, attempted in vain to rise! He wrote some
lines

lines in his blood upon a scroll of parchment, which he addressed to Gabrielle de Vergy. He then conjured his squire, as soon as the life should depart from his body, to cut out his heart, and carry it with his letter to Gabrielle de Vergy, that she might pity him, and receive it when he should be no more, although she scorned it when he was alive. The squire, while the tears fell fast from his eyes, swore to obey him; and beheld the unfortunate de Coucy give his last sigh, in mentioning Gabrielle de Vergy!

The squire bore the pale corpse of de Coucy from the field; and with real anguish and sorrow in the most decent manner, cut out the heart and covered it with embalmments. As soon as he had seen the last sad honours paid to his departed friend, by the King and the whole army,

army, who looked upon him as a miracle of valour, and one who had been worthy of a happier fate; he set off with the mournful present, to perform the last commands of his lamented friend.

Arriving at the castle, he made many enquiries, and was informed that Fayel had become a most cruel tyrant, and was feared and hated by his vassals and all who knew him. That he lived immured within his castle, and kept his lovely wife confined in the gloomiest part of his mansion. The Squire finding it impossible to gain an interview with the wife of Fayel, still hoped to be able to convey to her the letter and melancholy present, if she should happen to perceive him from the windows of her prison,

The jealous Fayel, ever liable to be roused by the smallest suspicion, observ-
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ing a stranger silently walking round the castle, and seemingly making his remarks; immediately began to suppose him a rival, and that he had some design upon his wife. Giving way to the first impulse of his passion, at the head of a chosen party of his vassals, he rushed upon the unfortunate Squire, and slew him. He then examined the letter, written in the blood of de Coucy; and feasted his eyes with the sight of his rival's heart. Yet his cruelty was not satisfied even here; and he resolved to triumph in a most brutal manner, in the agonies the unhappy Gabrielle should feel from the manner in which he intended to inform her of de Coucy's death.

With a horrid, savage joy expressed in his countenance, he returned to the castle.

castle. Enquiring with seeming affection for his wife, he lent in a polite manner to inform her, that at length his jealousy had vanished, and that he should have never more cause to oppress her, or fear a rival: and invited her to sit with him at supper. Agreeably surprized to find her lord on a sudden so altered, she thanked him for his politeness, and felt uncommon pleasure at so happy a change. At table her husband pressed her very much to eat, especially of a certain dish; which dreading to refuse, she did, and even with unusual appetite. The cruel Fayel then produced the letter written in the blood of de Coucy; and told her, that she had been eating the heart of her lover. The lovely, the virtuous, the unhappy Gabrielle de Vergy, overwhelmed with horror, love, pity, and remorse, refusing

refusing to take any nourishment, in a few days expired, and left her tyrant Fayel, to be as wretched as he had been jealous and cruel.

LET.

LETTER LV.

Burgundy, October 20th.

ON my arrival in France, although I did not suppose, I should find the people who massacred their fellow countrymen, and Christians, relations, and friends, on the eve of St. Bartholomew; yet I at least expected, to meet with a people more or less devoted to the particular modes of worship used by the church of Rome. I thought I was going among a nation of people devoted to some Christian form of worship. But now I may venture to say, that there is not, nor ever was a nation in the world, who have less religion than the modern French. The lower class of people, and also the clergy,

clergy, may keep up the shew of religion, but the generality of their genteel people make a scoff of the faith, and think it ridiculous to be a Christian. The Deistical works of Rousseau and Voltaire, are every where distributed through the kingdom, are universally read, and studied; and in my opinion have been the cause, of undermining the whole structure of Christianity in France; and in the course of half a century more, in all human probability, will totally erase all vestiges of revealed religion in the French nation.

One Monsieur de la Monnoye, of Burgundy, and a member of the academy at Dijon, wrote a collection of little poems, in which he endeavoured to ridicule the principal mysteries of our faith. It is the custom of this country about the
time

time of Christmas to sing hymns, in honour of the birth of the Messiah, Christ; which they call *nœls* or Christmas songs. Mr. de la Monnoye, called his collection of irreligious ballads also *nœls*, and made to the tunes of certain hymns they sing in the churches. He wrote them in the *patois* of the Burgundian peasants, a kind of vulgar and broken French, and with all the low humour and oddity he could invent, strove to place the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, and the infant Jesus, in a scandalously laughable point of view. I think, that at any rate, Mr. de la Monnoye did not behave like what we commonly call a wise man. For if he was a Christian, he acted like a madman, by writing against his faith, his interest, and his sentiments. And if he was not a Christian, he acted without considering his own interest; besides, he did not act
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the part of an honest man; for though he should have had no religion himself, he could not but perceive that it were better for the peace of society, that the generality of mankind should have some faith to restrain their passions and vices; and therefore it would be doing an injury to the world, to deprive them of it, and beat down the barriers of virtue and decorum. By writing his noëls in patois, he certainly intended them for the peasants; and if so, it was surely a wicked action in him, even though he might have been divested of all religion; to strive to make the poor creatures miserable, by depriving them, of the sweet hope of a future reward for their humility and honest behaviour. At any rate, he acted like a fool to himself; for he could not but have foreseen the consequence: He was expelled the academy

academy of Dijon, and his book was publicly burned by the doctors of Sorbonne.

If a man perfectly divested of prejudices, and arrived at the age of judgment and improved understanding, was to make choice of a religion, after the maturest deliberation, and impartial examining of the various religions used in different ages and nations, he certainly would adopt Christianity, as offering the most excellent precepts for the happiness of society, and even teaching us to love our enemies, a sentiment inimitably charitable. And yet, we have at times so fashioned our faith in different ages and nations, so combined it with the interest of individuals, so deviated from the original purity of the Gospel, that we have turned to the destruction of one another, the very religion which
should

should have made us good and happy in this as well as in a future state. The crusades, with the famine, leprosy, and all the other horrors they occasioned; the massacre of St. Bartholomew; the Sicilian vespers; and all the wars of Christians against one another about modes and forms of worship, were the melancholy events of the pure and infinitely charitable precepts of Divine revelation.

I once heard, a very worthy Divine declare, that he thought, it would have been better for the *temporal* benefit of mankind in general, that all the absolute sovereigns since the diffusion of Christianity had never had any religion at all. Because, such sovereigns would have looked with perfect impartiality on all the different persuasions of their subjects;

jects; and would not have been so frequently persecuting them on account of spiritual tenets.

Quicquid deliriant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

Of all absurdities I think this of religious persecution to be the greatest, to imagine, that we are acting in the cause of God and Christianity, by striving to oppress or destroy all such as differ from us in belief, when that very religion commands us even to do good to those who hate us, to return kindness for insult. One man may have intellects and genius far superior to the generality of the world; and such a person may perhaps form ideas of the immensity of the Godhead, far more sublime and great, than any thing a meaner soul is capable of conceiving. And were such a man an absolute sovereign, it would
be

be a most unreasonable thing, were he to expect by compulsion to make all his subjects have the same conceptions of a Divine being, that he had. And on the contrary, were an opposite character invested with a supreme authority, a being like a very considerable part of mankind, incapable of forming any idea of a Divinity, but such as that of the brave general la Hire, when immediately before the sacking of a town he made this short prayer to the Almighty. "God, I beg
" of you to do as much for la Hire
" to-day, as you would have him to do
" for you, if God was la Hire, and
" that la Hire was God." Were such a man invested with supreme authority, it would be a melancholy thing that all other persons should be forced to pretend their ideas were on a level with his. The conduct of Lewis XIV. and
other

other sovereigns on both sides of the question, puts me in mind of the story of Busris. This tyrant thought, that no man ought to be one inch either taller or less than himself. He got an iron bed prepared, exactly proportioned to the length of his own body. Into this bed he put a variety of persons. Such as were not long enough, by the means of ropes and pulleys he stretched to the proper length; but such on the contrary as were too long, with a hatchet he quickly reduced to what he judged to be the standard of perfection.

It begins to be really cold here already. The chilly blasts of wind called *la bise* by the Burgundians, already waft hither the piercing cold from the mountains, and all the bounties of vegetation are destroyed. The vines which a few

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days

days ago appeared covered with broad leaves, and weighed down by loads of luxuriant fruit at present offer a forrowful picture of desolation and dreary ruin. The vintagers have already given the first dressing to the vines, and stripped them of the leafy honours which they bore, and left but one poor solitary leaf upon each vine. The red earth appears in the vineyards: And the grateful vines having given all they could, now seem to droop like a mother exhausted by a numerous offspring. They shrink before the winter's cold, and pine in torpid sleep; until the kind warmth of the vernal sun shall invite them, once more to bud out their tender leaves, and generate new fruit.

This is probably the last letter I shall write to you from France: And now let me

me take my leave of the French. Though we may say they are made of insincerity and levity, yet I have experienced among them real politeness and good nature.— Though I should have received an injury, yet I would not therefore be prejudiced against a whole nation. I have every where been received in Burgundy with a politeness and warmth of affection, that must ever make me love and esteem the inhabitants. I have been here now a few weeks, and indeed they were the happiest moments of my life. And when after some time, I shall be advanced in life, and have the cares of the world to occupy my attention, I fear I shall never be so happy again; nor when I shall be far from the Burgundians, shall I ever think of them without almost melting into tears.

F I N I S.



